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1950 A.D.



1993 A.D.

The

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November 10th 1994

FIFA

FIFA 95

SOCCER

Anatomy of the modern footballer



- Improved intelligence. Players move off the ball, provide better service and more accurate passes.



- Bullet headers on goal, beyond the reach of the diving 'keeper.





- New volleys – and you'll need it to go one-on-one with these smarter 'keepers.
- Goals come from volleys, half-volleys and swerving banana shots.



- Harder shots!
- Faster players!
- Stronger passes!



Composite screenshot

- Score from deadly set play free kicks.



- Over 200 international teams.
- Play a complete domestic league season, then take your team on tour abroad.



- Pick up a niggling injury and you could be out for the season.

FIFA

FIFA 95 SOCCER

The Next Leap Forward

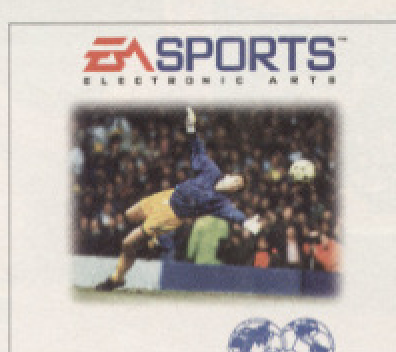
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Unless you want to be a football dinosaur, you'd better adapt to FIFA Soccer '95.

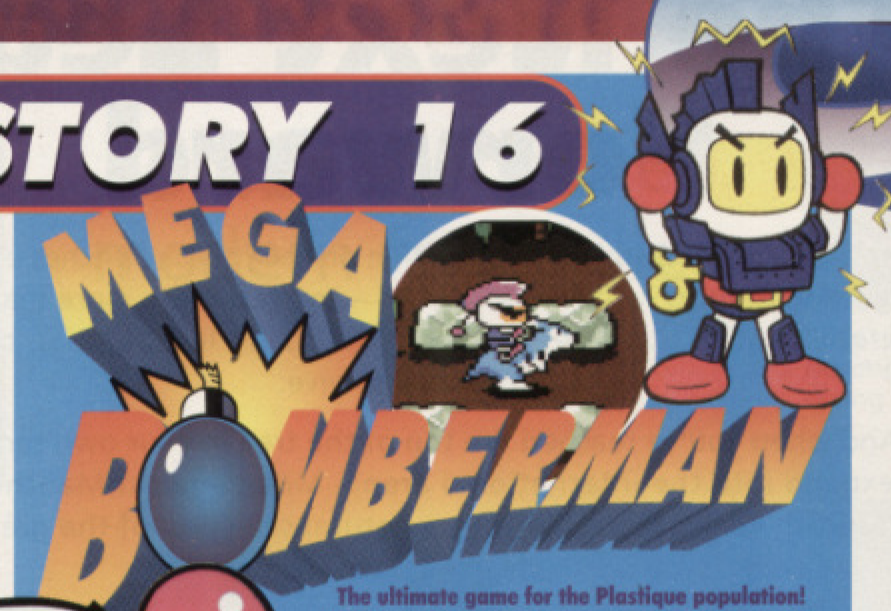




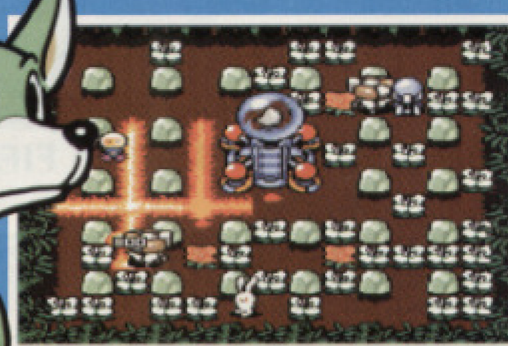
if it's in the GAME, it's in the GAME™

EA SPORTS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

COVER STORY 16



The ultimate game for the Plastique population! Hudsonsoft's family of maze-game rumblers with their explosive excretions finally make it to the megadrive. And it's a dynamite review!







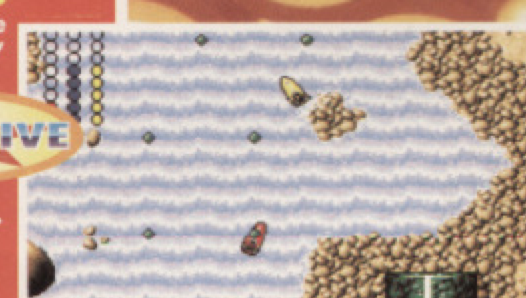
REGULARS

REVIEWS

MEGADRIVE







MEGA-CD



NTENTS



FEATURES



PREVIEWS

MASTER SYSTEM



GAME GEAR

EDITORIAL

WHODUNNIT

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SPECIAL NO THANKS TO: The Guardians of fire safety. To the biggest joke in the industry for not having a sense of humour — you know who you are!

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COMPETITION RULES
Employees and suppliers of EMAP IMAGES, and their relatives and fish are not eligible for competitions. Well, who wants a poxy Joe 90 suitcase anyway. Not me, I can tell you — plastic sh...

GREAT UNANSWERED QUESTIONS OF OUR TIME: Nos 13 and 14.
13. How would a dog liked it if you worried its leg? 14. Whatever happened to Barbara Bain — was she dematerialised by a staple gun?

DINGBATS MESSAGE



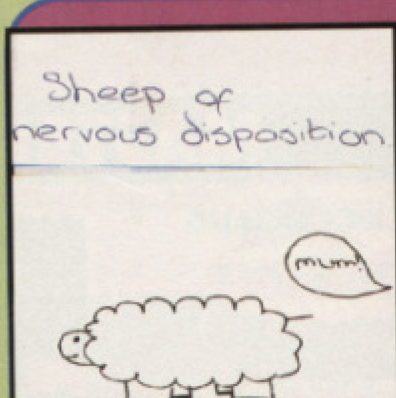
STEVE

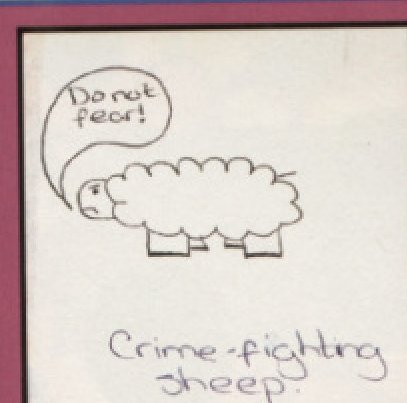
It has been a bit of a nightmare month, and I haven't got the energy to write too much here. Needless to say, we've got more exclusives than any other mag, with Sparkster, Starblade, Probotector, Mega Bomberman, Wolverine and Theme Park debuting this month — alongside loads of others. That's about all I've got to say for now, but next month we step up our 32X coverage big time with proper looks at the machine and the games for it. Make sure you're there because we're the best ticket intot he future of Sega gaming you've got (copyright extremely crap cliches, Ltd. 1973). Right, I'm off...
STEVE

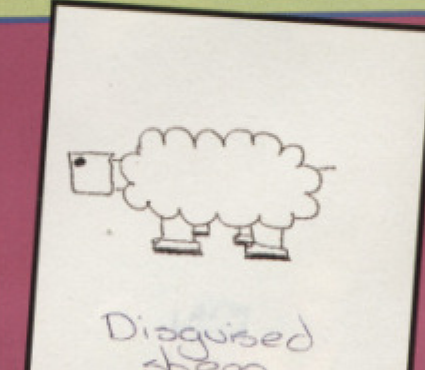
OH, WE DO LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEASIDE

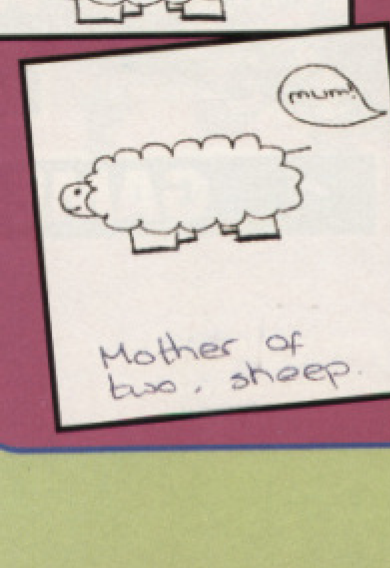
Last month Clacton was the biggest MEAN MACHINES giveaway to date! Who better to hand out the goodies than the team's boy wonder, Paul (oh yeah? — everyone else bar Paul). Armed with a thermos full of hot sweet tea, he braved wind and rain to hand out five copies of Sensible Soccer on Clacton Pier. It wasn't long before five eager MEAN MACHINES readers nabbed him mid hot dog and demanded their carts. The next, and even more spectacular, hand out of Acclaim goodies will happen on Saturday 8th October at 2pm sharp, when one of the crew will be hanging around Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. Be warned though, any claimants without copies of this issue will go home empty handed. See you there!





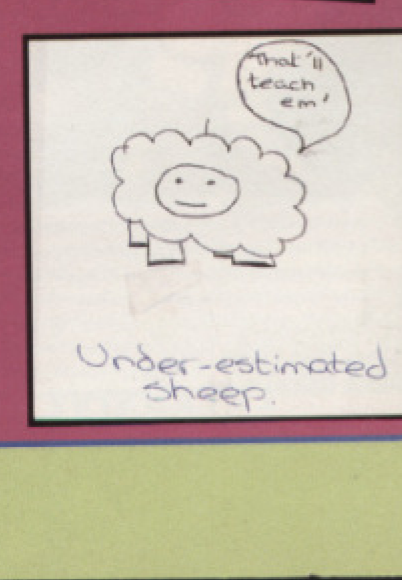






LOOKING SHEEPISH

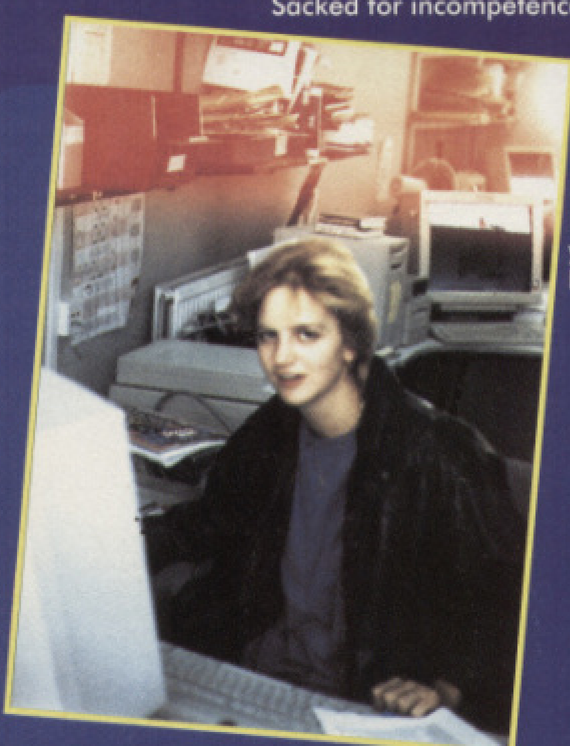
MEAN MACHINES always brings you the best in fledgling design ideas. Here's a selection of 'Sheep by Charlie', an odd but smart series of mutton concepts. Send in some more Charly, we'd like to hear from you...



RIAL

HICKMAN CRASHES OUT!

Sacked for incompetence and for knee-ing Lord Emap in the groin...oh alright, Lucy's leaving us to become a lawyer, basically because she has a fondness for powdered wigs and pots of cash. And a boozy red nose like Rumpole. There's a collective tear in our eyes and much blubbing, as we remember the good times from the last two years. Boy, that girl knew how to party. Best of luck in the Judiciary, doll!



▲ ***I give you... Ms Justice Hickman. Firm but fair. Only passes the death sentence on a bad day.***

DEPT. OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

The last time Steve was winding through his videos of old Public Information films he suddenly reflected on the Chip Pan. What the hell ever happened to the Chip Pan? When we were young every family had a nice big greasy chip pan sat on the cooker with crusty brown edges all around the top. Filled to the brim with hot fat it was so versatile — you could cook all sorts of meats, scotch eggs, frozen pizzas, Mr Kipling's French Fancies in batter...

There was even a short film shown every night that told you what to do if your chip pan caught fire (it always waited until you answered the phone, the loo brush salesman arrived or you went for a crap). For the benefit of our readers the DOPI informs you:

1. Never throw water on a flaming chip pan.
2. Don't try to take it to the door or the air blows the fat into your face, adding some attractive scar tissue markings.
3. Turn off the heat (stupid).
4. Soak a wet tea towel (if you're common and don't have tea towels then a towel will do) make sure it's not your favourite one with the recipe for Cock-a-Leekie.
5. Throw least favourite tea towel over pan. Then get out the paint roller as you'll probably have to repaint the whole blinkin kitchen.



OOPS!

If you were in the Farringdon area just after the last issue was released you may have heard a distinct cracking sound. It was Oz's knuckles being broken after a design flaw caused a tiny error in our Mortal Kombat II guide. Basically, we printed the Kung Lao Hat Decap Fatality tips, but printed the Body Split pics — but forgot the text for the Split. Doh! Ah well, here's how: Stand about an inch away and push R, R, R + LK
Hope that helps.

THE LOVE CHILDREN

Being too stingy to place a 'Lonely Hearts' in a proper magazine, the team decided to abuse their editorial status and find true happiness through a MEAN MACHINES personal ad:

STEVE MERRETT



26 year-old magazine editor seeks soulmate interested in spending evenings in sub-editing, proof-reading and headline-writing. Must be prepared to stick to a tight budget and produce love letters to deadline. Physically stunning, but has writer's cramp, tennis elbow and housemaid's knee, so needs a lady skilled in massage with her own bucket of flash. Box Fresh.
CHOICE GAMES:MKII, Jelly Boy, Bomberman

OZ BROWNE



Art Editor (age not quite sure) is looking for the right woman to share a canvas with. Looks unimportant (but must pass as Janet Jackson enough to do PAs at supermarkets). You'll have to put up with my fondness for certain carribbean nectars, and how I behave at parties. Hobbies: flower pressing, morris dancing and watching X-rated bloodthirsty manga videos. Apply Box Crazy.
CHOICE GAMES:MKII, Super Streetfighter II

ANGUS SWAN



Man of mystery seeks mysterious person to share elusive times. Have a tendency to be indecisive and procrastinate, I think. Maybe suited to some sort of fortune teller — Mystic Meg, Doris Stokes — are you out there? Is anybody there? Has expensive tastes (Antoni and Alison on top, Calvin Klein underneath, socks at Top Man). My perfect partner will care for me and know how to cook eggs soft-boiled. Box Clever.
CHOICE GAMES:Daytona, Micro Machines 2, Red Zone

CLAIRE COULTHARD



Flamboyant girl-about-town Just Seventeen reader. Just 26, actually. Seeks...well where do I start? Works as a Deputy Art Editor, so wants someone who knows how to handle a crayon. Absolutely crap at games, so you would ideally only have three fingers to give me a chance. Don't worry if you have more, I can deal with the rest. Replies from royalty especially welcome — as people have called me Little Lady Muck before. Box Room.
CHOICE GAMES:Mortal Kombat, Zombies.

PAUL BUFTON



Fresh-faced graduate wants Jane Seymour lookalike to mix some medicine and appreciate the finer things in life. Most striking feature is my beautiful blond goldie locks. Makes me look like Brad from Neighbours, or sometimes Worzel Gummidge if it's a bad hair day. Could you be my Aunt Sally? Love is a mental thing for me, so relationship by correspondance would be perfect — no rows over the remote control and such. I live in Clapham, but please don't hold that against me. Box -ed in.
CHOICE GAMES:Bomberman, Probotector, Red Zone

Remember — don't phone, it's just for fun!

UNDER THE SEA

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- 32X

With the promise of over thirty 32X games ready for the plug-in's release above their heads, Sega have unveiled more products for the system — including the extremely impressive, Shadow Of Atlantis. Atlantis places the player within a detailed sub as they investigate a series of odd goings-on at the bottom of the sea. The sub and the assorted vehicles it contains are all updated in real-time, with the 32X's RISC chips adding more detail than you'll see in most PC games. Release details are a little shaky at the mo, but we'll be keeping our eye right on this 'un. Ouch.









THIS TI

- NEW GAME
- BY ACCLAIM
- SATURN/32X

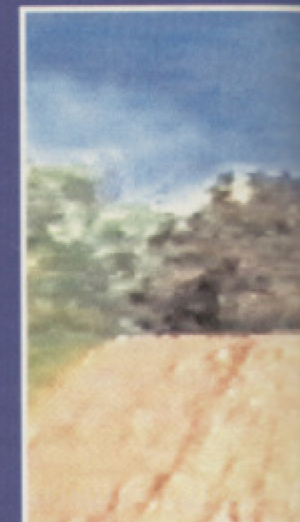
Shown here in all their glory are the first shots to emerge from Acclaim's forthcoming Alien Trilogy game. Written by Probe, Alien Trilogy runs along the same lines as Doom, with the player guiding a Colonial Marine through a series of labyrinthian corridors across a variety of missions. However, rather than simply stick to the expected first-person perspective, Probe have added a series of camera views so the fully-rendered marines and aliens can be viewed from any angle! Similarly, control over your marine is extensive, allowing for running at break-neck speed, edging along the wall in order to pass quietly, and looking in every direction. Similarly, footage from the film has been completely recreated for use in linking screens, and the game opens with the famous APC docking scene taken from Aliens. It's about time someone did the Alien trilogy of films justice in a video game, and this looks like it could be the one. More soon.



MOTORBIKIN'

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- 32X

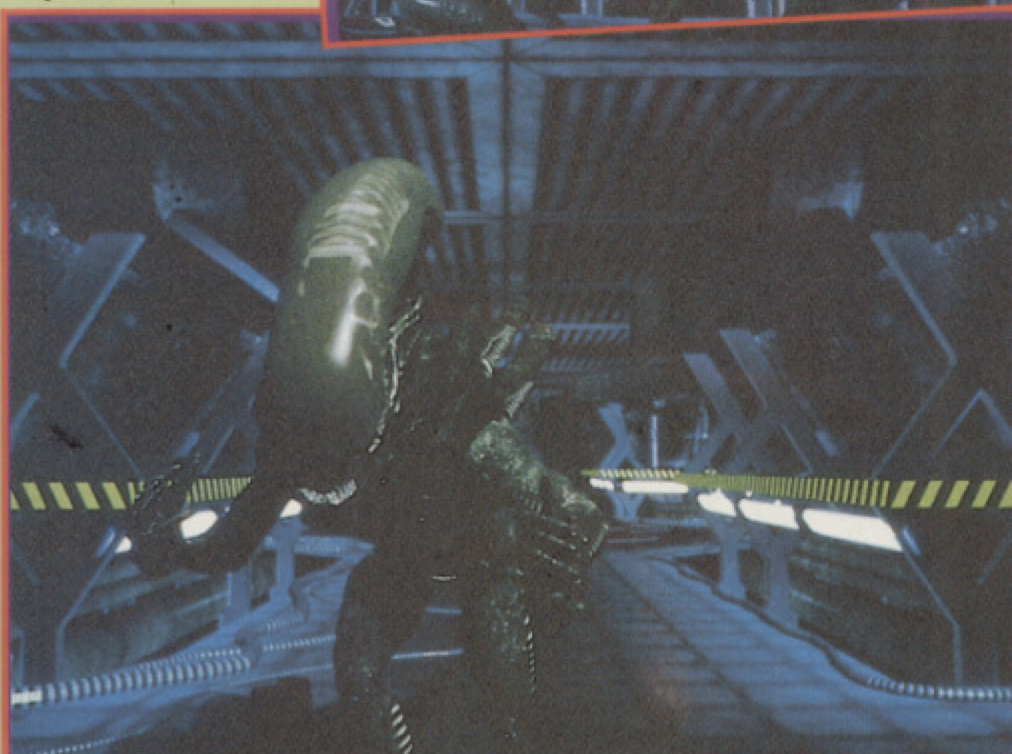
Revving up for a November release is Sega's 32X dirtbike racer, Super Motorcross. Using an isometric perspective to view the scrolling courses, the player is given control of a tiny on-screen mean machine as they compete in a number of time trials. All the usual bump and jump obstacles have been included, and there are also a number of water and log hazards to overcome.



ME IT'S 32X!



▼ The aliens and Marines are all built up from a wireframe skeleton, upon which the bodies are placed. With the physique in place, the bodies are rendered and light-sourced — the latter of which can be altered mid-game to give the impression of a shining alien skin! Blimey, a fairly helpful caption.



▲ The Marines march through the dingy corridors which, after a while, become encrusted with the alien secretion. Expect all the usual alien eggs, Facehugger escapades and acid blood surprises we have come to love from the films. This will make Alien Vs Predator on the Jaguar look like The Wizard Of Oz...





MORE CORE 32X

- NEW GAME
- BY CORE
- 32X

Not content with bringing you the first 32X pics of Core's Tee-Off golf sim, feast your eyeballs on these pics of another forthcoming 32bit Core goodie, Swagman. Starring the titular sneak thief and his fully-rendered colleagues, the basic aim of the game is to infiltrate a bizarre, angular building with the intention of 'turning it over'. Details regarding the game plan and scenario are a little thin on the ground, but Core's aim is to create an arcade/adventure which rivals Sega's forthcoming Saturn epic, Clockwork Knight. Coo.







SOLDIER BLADES

- NEW GAME
- BY NAMCO
- MEGADRIVE

One of the quietest Sega licensees, Namco now have something to shout about. They've converted their 1992 polygon space shoot 'em up, Starblade, to the Mega CD, and it's part of Sega's Crimble line-up. Starblade features pre-generated 3D polygon flights as you fight your way from the Mother Planet, to the doom-laden 'Red Eye' which threatens to obliterate your home world. Starblade boasts a booming CD soundtrack and FX, although some of the filled-in polygons have been replaced by wire-frame vectors, due to the Mega-CD's processing limits.



Eek! The Tomato People are preparing to overtake the planet Freezia!



Ok, now when I hit the dashboard I want you to bring the vehicle to a stop.



Hey, this is like that bit in Star Wars where that planet has just been blown up, and...

SOCCER TO ME

- NEW GAME
- BY EA
- MEGADRIVE



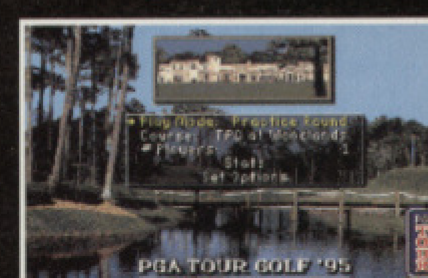


Just when you thought it was safe to put on nobbly boots again, EA produce a near complete version of FIFA '95, the direct sequel to their big smash last Christmas. As well as a new front end — including national leagues from around the globe — football Italia and Brazil amongst them, the gameplay has been radically altered to play a passing-friendly game and at a far greater lick than FIFA Soccer.

PLUS FOURS (PART 3)

- NEW GAME
- BY EA
- MEGADRIVE

Megadrive owners will be calling fore for the third time in December with EA's PGA 3. This year's European Tour cart was really just the PGA 2 engine with fresh courses, but PGA 3 is a whole new bag of clubs. EA have managed to double the amount of colours for the course graphics: up to 32 from 16, and the celebrity golfers are now fully rendered from digitised footage: each shows his characteristic swing. The golfing feast has now been expanded from four courses to six.





PIT YOUR WITS

- NEW GAME
- BY ACCLAIM
- MEGADRIVE

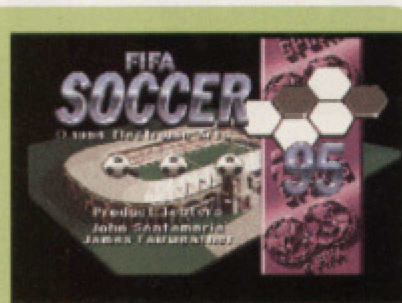
For those who associate 'Indy' with bull whips and Last Crusades can get a turbo-charged awakening with Nigel Mansell's Indy Challenge. Programmed by Gremlin Graphics, it features the former Formula One champion on the courses of the North American Indy circuit. First person perspective racing, including a dual player mode, plus fifteen other opponents make up the field. It's on the grid for a November release.







▲ *I could be wrong, but I reckon this is a penalty kick.*



▲ *Introducing... the game's title screen. Ta-da!*





YUMMY SCRUMMY

- NEW GAME
- BY EA
- MEGADRIVE

After football, Hockey and basketball, the next sport to get the EA 'It's in the game' treatment is Rugby Union. Perhaps unsurprising as it's the second most popular team sport in Britain. The game is in the early stages of production, but is shaping up to an isometric-viewed scrumarama, with four-player team play, and some very realistic violence. EA are unable to say if Eddie Waring will be doing a star guest turn when the game is released in December.



NIGHT FLIGHT

- NEW GAME
- BY DOMARK
- MEGADRIVE

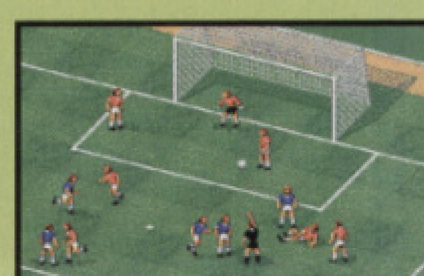
Following the so-so Mig-29 of last year, Domark's programming team, the Kremlin, have had another crack at a combat flight sim, this time on the Mega-CD. Flying Nightmares takes the elite squadron of the US Marines' Harrier Jump Jets (featured recently in True Lies) as its inspiration. The Mega-CD's custom ASIC chip hardware is used to create moving ground textures for the sensation of flight. There's lots of things to kill, with Domark promising the game will be more arcade than flight sim. Flying out sometime before Christmas.





LIKE, TOTALLY!

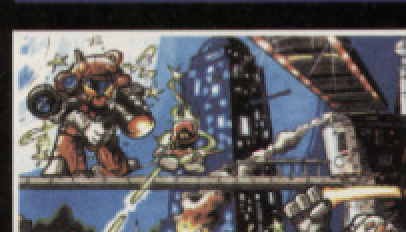
- NEW GAME
- BY DOMARK
- MEGADRIVE



The terraces of Megadrive football games are due to swell again, with Domark asking us to kop a load of Total Football, their contribution now in production. The Megadrive is the only format due to receive the game and it features 2500 animation frames and 50 different player moves as well as letting you participate in celebration and disappointment routines. So now you know.

DIGITAL CLOCK

- NEW GAME
- BY DOMARK
- 32X



One of Domark's early forays into the next generation consoles will be Timmy Time, a time-travel platform shoot 'em up extravaganza. Starring a dinky little jet-packed hero with a Rich Leadbetter haircut, whose warping antics take him through Space, Western and Medieval genres, Domark promise 'a unique combination of cartoon graphics and rendered images'. Planned for release in some future era.

WIN! JOE 90 GOODIES

- COMPO
- BY PANINI



▲ *"Hello, I'm Mr Coulthard and I'm on my way to work."*

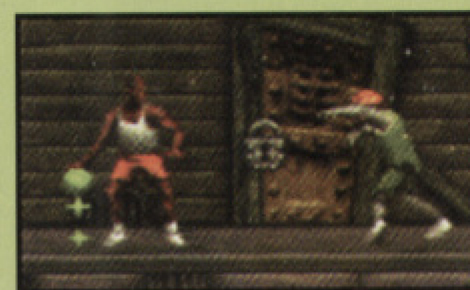
Anyone stupid enough to be up early on Saturday may have tuned into the recent repeats of Joe 90 on BBC1. Well, to celebrate the return of Gerry Anderson's greatest hero to our screens, we've teamed up with the peeps at Panini to bring you a selection of Joe 90 goodie bags, including a rather smart 'Special Agent Briefcase' (I kid you not) which contains a pair of Joe's famed specs and loads of other stuff, a Joe figure and Air Car, and a secondary spy kit. They're worth about £60 to buy, but we've got twenty to give away to the first people to answer the following question and send the answer into the usual MEAN MACHINES SEGA address, marked **HOLY JOE COMPO:**
Which of the following isn't a Gerry Anderson series.

A. Terrahawks.
B. Bleep And Booster
C. Fireball XL5

JORDAN ADVENTURE

- NEW GAME
- BY EA
- MEGADRIVE

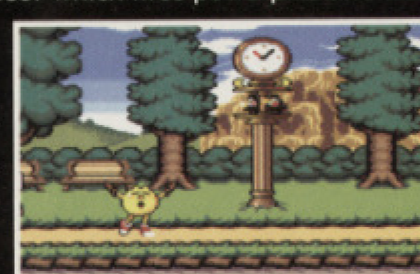
Basketball hero Michael Jordan aims to rob Shaquille O' Neill of his title of 'Basketball star to feature in weirdest unrelated video game' with EA's Michael Jordan adventure. His finger-tipping, all-dunking sprite (whose 350 frames of animation are taken from digitised footage of the tall guy himself) takes on various zombie un-lifeforms, in a nightmare scenario that seems to borrow from George A. Romero's Living Dead films. A release is planned soon, but exact details are sketchy.



VACUUM PAC-ED

- NEW GAME
- BY NAMCO
- MEGADRIVE

After a long time in the wilderness, Namco are resurrecting Pac Man from the games dumper by plugging him more than Kylie's new album. Their Pac Man 2 is a strange fish (actually, it's a game). Starring the old trooper in a sideways scrolling puzzle game, the player has control over a cursor which fires powerpills and dots, all to the end of stopping the rotund hero from falling over skateboards, avoiding barking dogs and generally negotiating the neighbourhood. As yet we haven't got a clue what's really going on there, but normal service will be resumed next month. Probably.



HAND BALL

- NEW GAME
- BY EA
- GAMEGEAR

Prepare to experience the handheld of God as EA have amazingly developed FIFA Soccer for the Game Gear. All the features of the original Megadrive version are comfortably included, and that means the isometric view stays as does the multi-player option. This one's heading for a Christmas release, and we'll have a review as soon as poss.



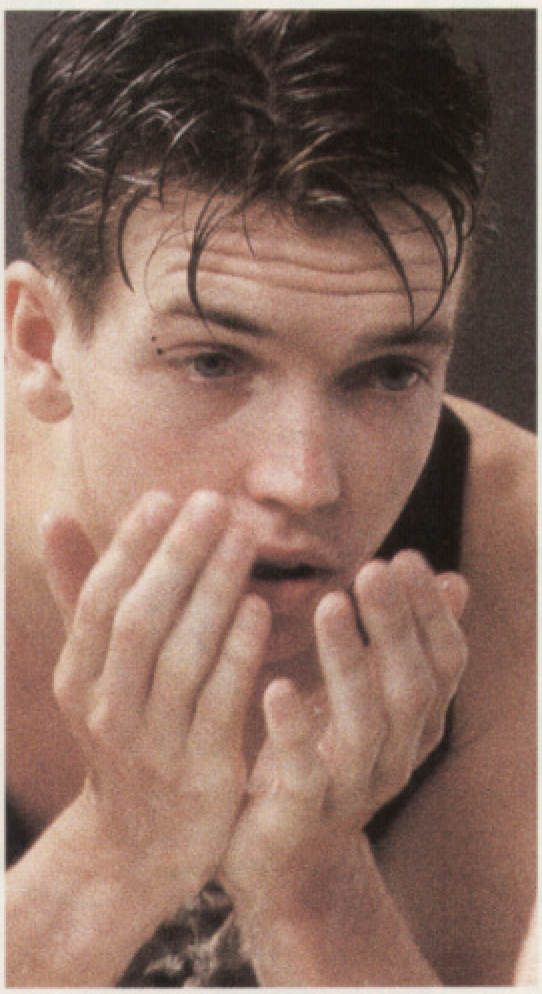


YOU DON"T SAY

Bonjour mes petit Segaphiles, welcome to zee world of gosseep...

Proudly brandishing their newly-acquired Sega licence, Interplay have snapped up one of the biggest licences of next year in the form of Spielberg's forthcoming **Casper The Friendly Ghost**. Starring Christina Ricci from the Addams Family, Monty python's Eric Idle co-starring as a mad englishman (quelle surprise), and ILM's stunning computer graphics providing the ghost effects, the film should be massive when it is released early next year with the game appearing soon after. As such, **Rock'n'Roll Racing**, **Clay Fighters** and **Boogerman** are also expected early next year.
Over to Brummie geezers, US Gold, who have a plethora of goodies entering development. First on the starting block is **Izzy: Atlanta '96** which is a platformer starring the mascot of the next Olympic games, and this will be followed by an officially-endorsed sports sim with loads of Olympic events. Following those, US Gold have a swashbuckling **Zorro** adventure on its way to cash in on the forthcoming Spielberg (doesn't that guy sleep?) film, and another similar sword-related game in the form of the one-on-one slice 'em up, **Touche**. Finally, we bring our US G round-up to a close with a sequel to **Hulk**. No comment.
Well, it has been a quiet month for dumped software with no real casualties, but I'll just finish with the news that Shiny have just started work on **Earthworm Jim 2**. First of all, though the first Jim is heading for a coin-op near you in a massively-revamped form. More on both of these reet soon.
'Til next month,
Pip pip.

YOU WON'T SEE ME WITH SPOTS.





That's it. That's all you need to know about how to get clean, healthy skin. And how to keep it that way.

Of course, even when I'm really careful a persistent spot can slip through the net. And if one does, I just use some Oxy 10. But I hardly ever have to.

HARDLY EVER.

Getting spots was no big deal. But given the choice, I can live without them. It's been a while since I've had one. Nowadays I use Oxy* Clean Facial Wash.

Twice a day, morning and night – no more soap and water for me.

First, I wet my hands and clean them thoroughly with Oxy Clean Facial Wash. Then I lather up some more and rub it all over my face before rinsing it off.



Always read the label. Oxy 10 contains Benzoyl Peroxide. * OXY and OXYCUTE 'EM are trademarks.

OXYCUTE 'EM!*



1-5 PLAYERS | **8 MEG**

GAME TYPE
BLOW 'EM UP(!)

PRICE £34.99

BY SEGA

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS:EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

1ST DAY SCORE
REACH CRAB BOSS

ORIGIN
Bomberman started his explosive life on the PC Engine, before jumping ship to the Nintendo machines. This is an expanded version of those.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Collect pieces of puzzle in the one-player game, or simply blow three mates into small pieces in the multi-player mode.





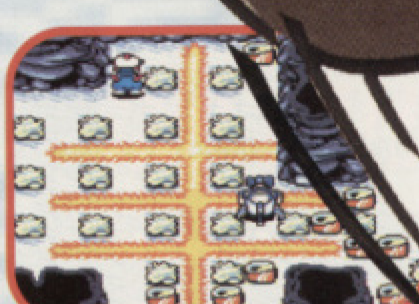


Consoles come and go, bringing with them the occasional gaming hero destined to stand the test of time. Thus, whilst the likes of Bounty Bob, Technician Ted, and Monty Mole are now but vague memories of past platformers, Hudsonsoft's explosive-lobbing hero, Bomberman, is a veritable 'Luvvie' of the games world — the binary equivalent of Bruce Forsythe, no less. But without the crap jokes. And wig.

Anyway, for longer than I care to mention, yon Bomberman has eked a living throwing large comedy bombs at a series of foes and opposing players. Whilst the premise may not sound that great, the sheer frenetic playability generated has won our hero a legion of fans on virtually every console known to man. Except the Megadrive, though. Mind you, that's all changed now as Sega have brought the little TNT-toting hero to a Megadrive near you. Which is quite lucky really, or our cover and the following five pages would be blank...

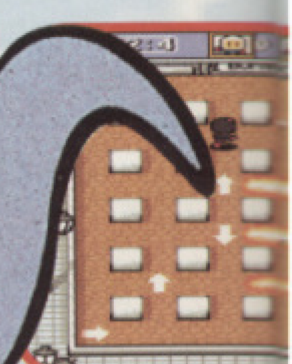
MEGA GAME





▲ *"Oi! Keep that bloody kangaroo off my octopus skin rug!"*





▲ *Behold Death's allies: Red, Bluey and, most fearful of all, Kanga...*

(MEGA) BOMBERMAN

TIE ME... ER, DONKEY, DOWN, SPORT

On locating an egg, touching the ovoid doubles Bomberman's durability by giving him a trusty steed. Whilst the newly-hatched creatures resemble brightly-coloured kangaroos, Sega assure us they are in fact donkeys — mind you, the picture on the game's title screen makes it look like kitten! The kangeroo's... sorry, donkey's main task in life is to act as an extra life for our hero and sacrifice themselves if hit by an explosion. However, depending on the animal's colour they can also perform extra functions, with blue ones jumping, the yellow ones moving blocks, and the green showing a handy turn of speed.

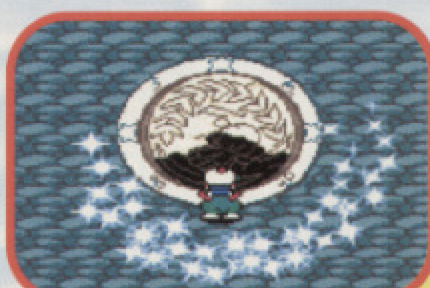












◄ *The phantom rug eater strikes again!*

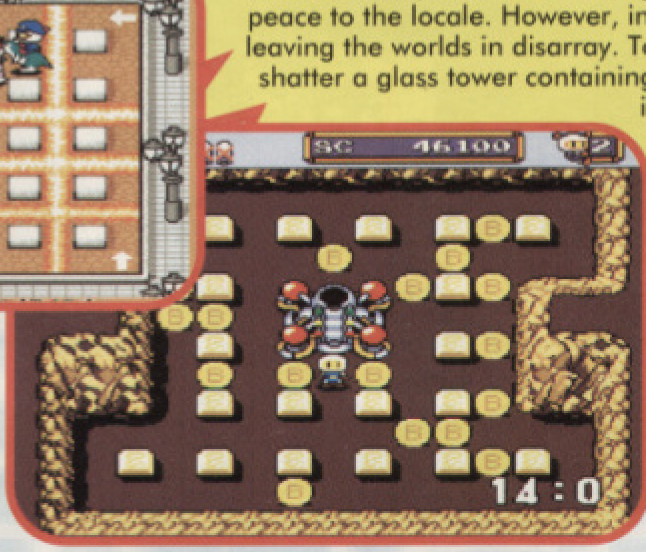
▲ *Trivial Pursuit: Bomberman style!*

▲ *Kangaroo detonation — ban this evil craze now!*

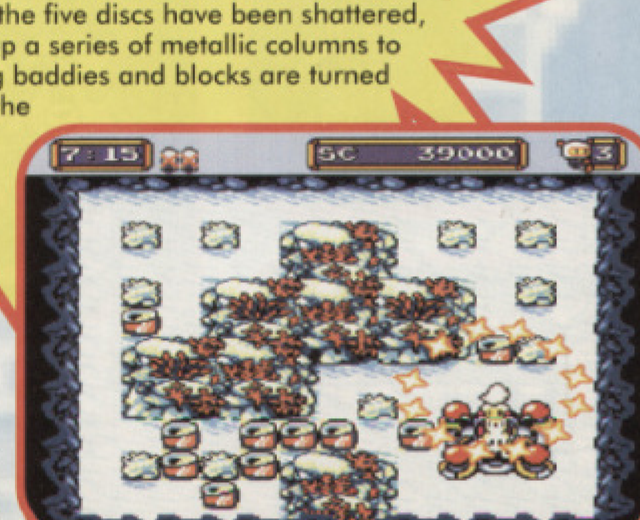
PICKING UP THE PIECES

Mega Bomberman is an amalgum of every version of the game released so far. In addition to the expected four-player mode, different bombs and play areas, Hudsonsoft have drafted in animals for our hero to ride and added an entire family of Bombermen (and Bomberwoman) to control. The one-player mode shows the greatest addition though, as a purpose has been given to the bomb-bunging antics. The game is split into five worlds, each of which is presided over by a boss. Each world is built around a circular disc which brings peace to the locale. However, in order for the game to have a scenario, the five discs have been shattered, leaving the worlds in disarray. To restore good, Bomberman must blow up a series of metallic columns to shatter a glass tower containing the pieces. On doing so, any remaining baddies and blocks are turned into bonus-giving coins and, eventually, the discs replaced. Simple.

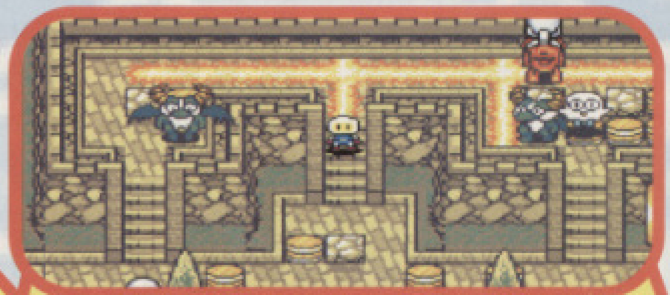














HOMES AND GARDENS

Whilst Mega Bomberman is a smart one-player game, it really comes alive when four people get together in an attempt to outwit each other. The multi-player mode begins with the four contestants (including really evil computer-controlled ones) trapped in a corner. From here, the basic aim is to blow your mates up using whatever comes to hand. However, in order to add a little spice to the proceedings, there are ten battlegrounds on offer. Let's see what sort of person lives in a maze like this:

ARROWED



Kicked bombs, follow arrows.

HAUNTED HOUSE



With trap doors!

LAVA



Everyone has multi bombs...

JUNGLE



Pretty basic.

NORMAL



Nowt, just a warm-up zone.

ICE



An icy backdrop. Not slippery, though, oddly enough.

CONVEYOR BELT



A moving platform is supplied to transport bombs.

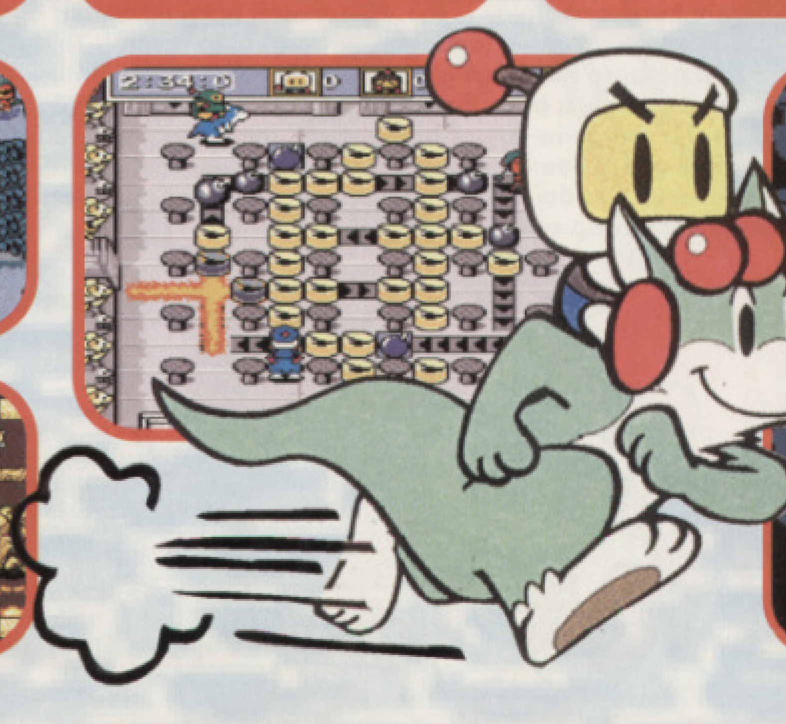
HI-SPEED ZONE



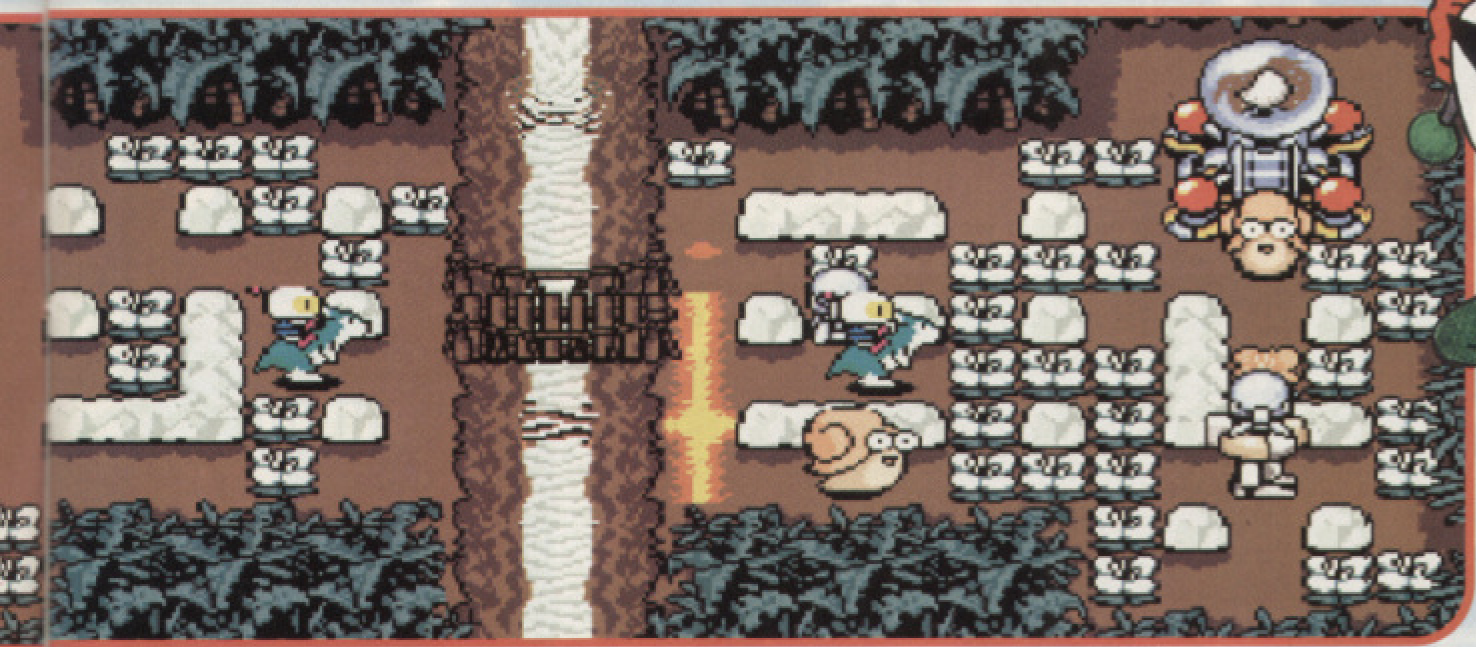
The action is three times as fast.













STEVE COMMENT

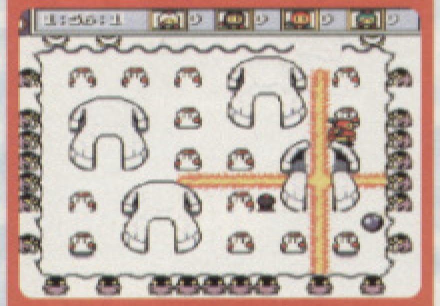
I have been an ardent Bomberfan throughout his many incarnations, but this Megadrive version is quite simply the best of the bunch. Rather than porting the rather dated Super NES game over lock, stock and barrel, Hudsonsoft have taken ideas from virtually every version of the game in existence, and created the ultimate Bomberman in the process. The basic premise of blowing up mates and collecting power-ups dates back to his first appearance in Dynablaster several years back, but the addition of kangaroos, a wealth of scrolling levels, and the toughest opponents this side of Chris Eubank bring Bomberman bang up to date and rightfully earns him his new 'Mega' moniker. I could go on for hours spouting praise for this stunning game. The four-player mode has to be played to be believed, the difficulty level is spot-on without resorting to frustration techniques, and the incredibly low price is a massive bonus. It may not be a MEG-heavy cart, but Mega Bomberman has more playability than most of the graphically fancy carts we've seen of late. The word classic is bandied around far too often, but if anything deserves it, this does.

SWAMP

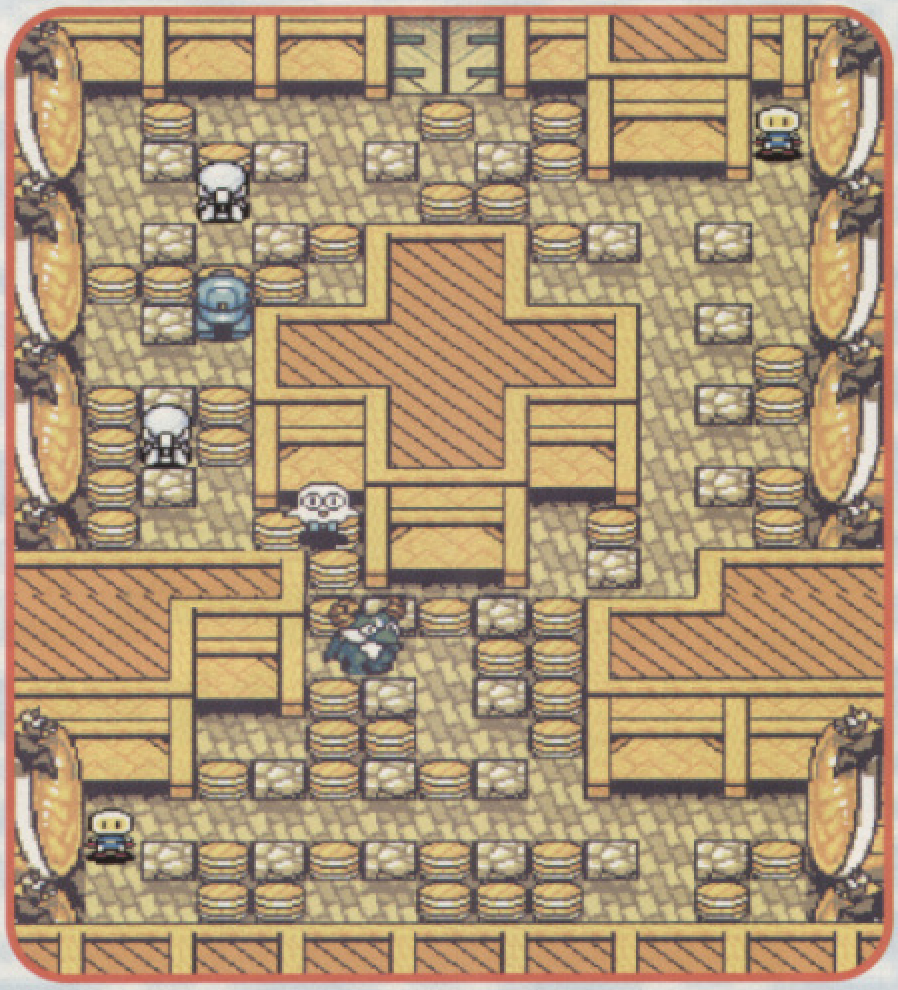


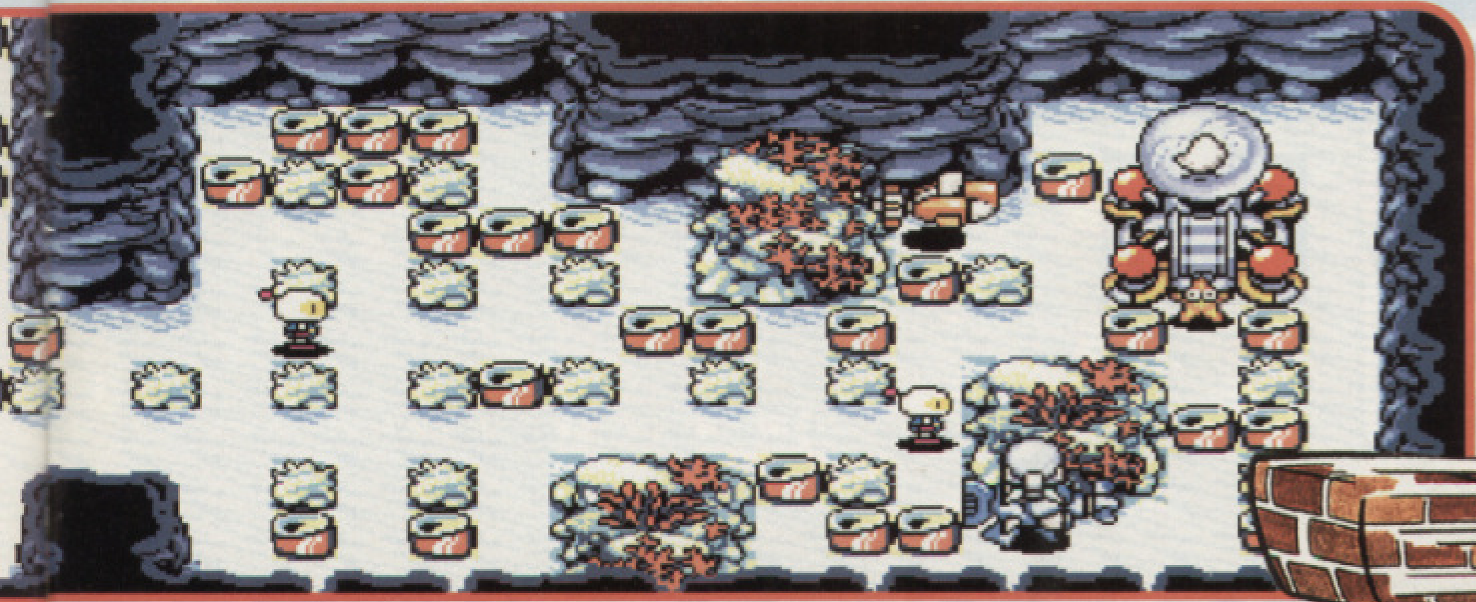
Hide in swamp weed.

ARCTIC



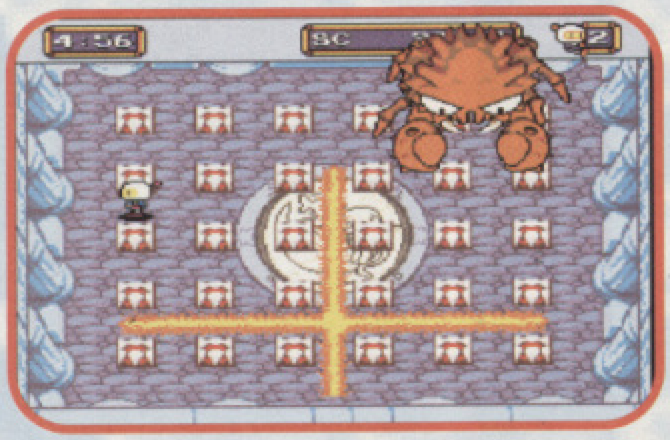
Run through igloos, and raise the roof — literally!











TNT-ED SHADES

Killing nasties or blowing a path through blocks often reveals an icon which, when collected, is immediately added to Bomberman's inventory. Hey, and guess what, here's a list of what they are...

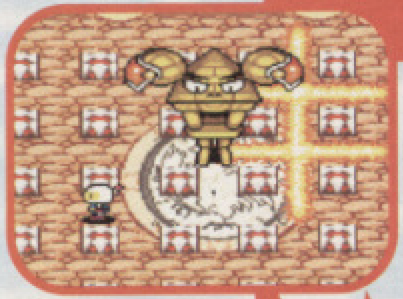
BOMB: Yer basic, simple extra explosive.
FLAME: Expands the range of the detonation.
FOOT: Punt bombs towards opponents.
HAND: Throw bombs.
EGG: A steed, no less.
THREE BOMBS: Plant three bombs at once.
JACKET: Temporary immunity.
SKULL: Uh-oh. One of several viruses.
CLOCK: Extra time.
SKATES: Move faster.
MAN: Extra life.
HEART: Concede two hits
BRICK: Walk through walls.
RED BOMB: Trigger bombs with A button.
BLUR BOMB: Walk through laid bombs.

COMMENT

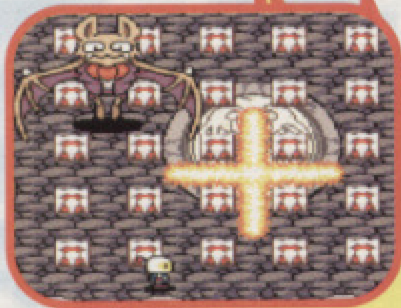


GUS

While the trend of Megadrive games is continual improvement, there has been a price to pay, and consumers have had to play it: £50, £60 then £70. Buying a game like Bomberman at £35 and finding it to be one of the greatest games ever (as indeed it is) is like all your Christmases come at once. The multi-player option, glorious in its simplicity, is the best reason ever to buy a four tap. You'll be hooked within minutes, yet still playing it heavily months ahead. Luckily, Hudsonsoft have been gracious enough to improve and add elements to this part of the game, the core of the Bomberman experience. The single-player mode, in all honesty is not half as rewarding, but still a pretty good crack, and there are masses of tough later levels. You have to have this game if you want to call yourself a serious Megadrive gamesplayer — it's as simple as that.







BOSSING ABOUT

No sooner have the missing pieces of amulet been retrieved, than the screen goes quiet and blocks drop on to the play area — hotly followed by a larger boss creature. Each of the game's five worlds is based on a graphical theme — water, volcanic, haunted house — and the bosses reflect this and appear in the guises of a large radio-controlled banana, a huge crab and a vampire. As has become the norm with bosses, they wander around the screen, loosing off the occasional stream of something deadly or morphing into another form, and only give up the ghost when sufficient TNT is pumped into them.





GRAPHICS 80

▲Plentiful backdrops, and a wide range of nifty ideas — including a mine cart ride!
▼Initial appearances may be off-putting — don't be fooled!

SOUND 76

▲The music adds to the frenetic nature of the multi-player game.
▼A bit weak in the explosion department to say the least.

PLAYABILITY 96

▲Second to none. Easier to grasp than a velcro beach ball, and with playability that outlasts the Queen Mum in the longevity stakes..

LASTABILITY 93

▲The one-player modes gets tough after the third boss, so won't be completed in a hurry. The multi-player mode will keep you burning the midnight oil.

VFM 95

▲ £35 for this! It's a steal! Get it before they change their minds...

OVERALL 94

Playability incarnate. Mega Bomberman is quite simply the most addictive game of the year. A steal at the price and a genuine classic.

Have you got enough mates?



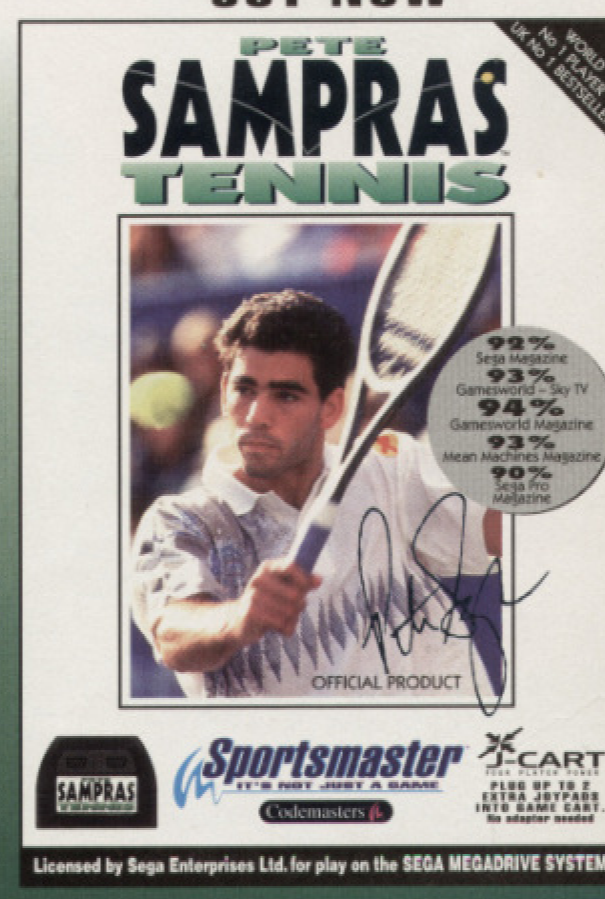
J-CART

FOUR PLAYER POWER

Codemasters' **J-CART** is the world's only video games cartridge that gives you simultaneous **four-player action instantly.** You don't need anything, - so you can **forget adaptors.** It's all there. With two built-in joypad connectors, just slam two joypads into the J-CART, the usual pair in the console and get ready for an **adrenaline-pumping four-player challenge game.**

The question is... have you really got enough mates?

PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS ON J-CART OUT NOW



THE SEQUEL TO

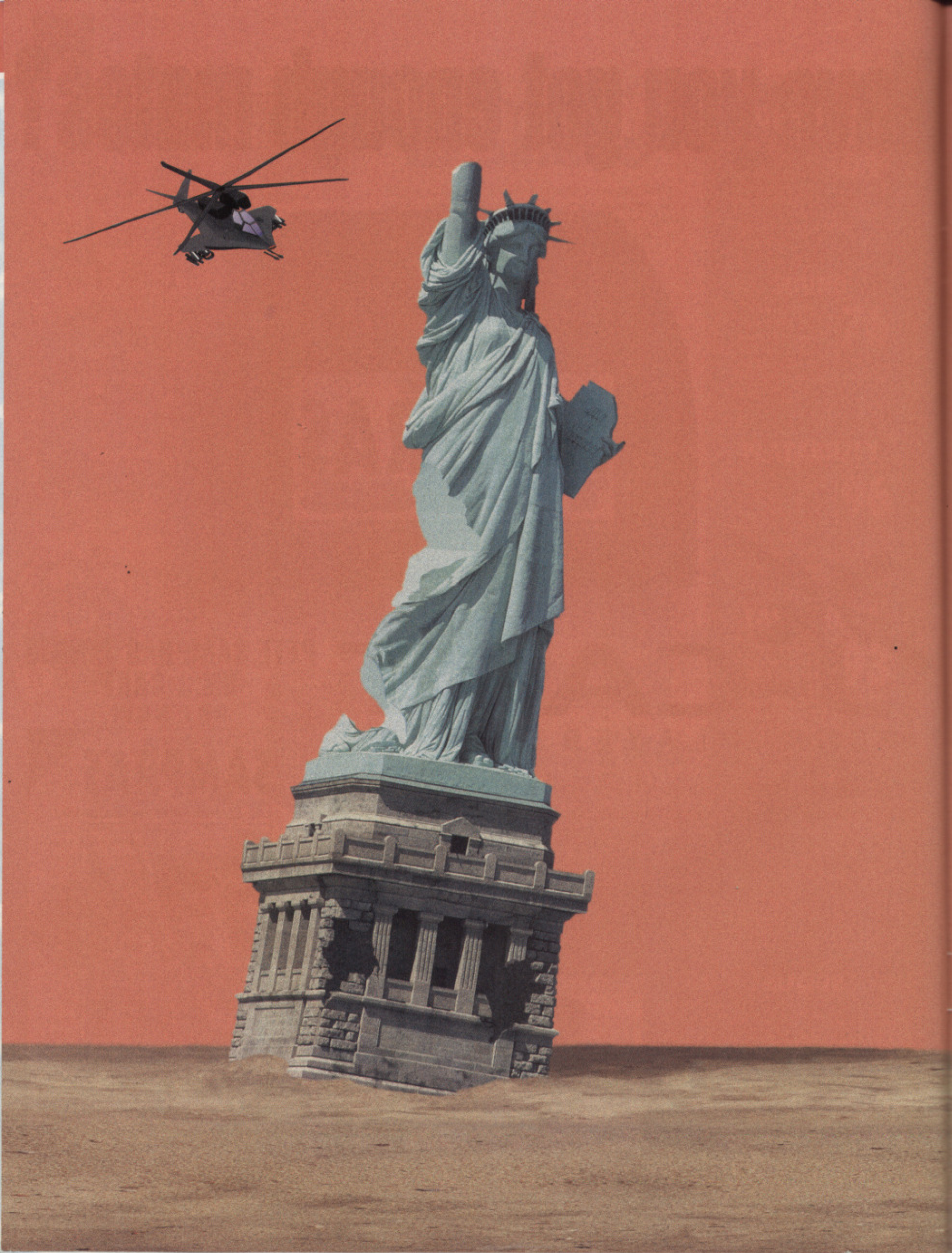
Micro Machines

OUT NOVEMBER 25th

ON 4-PLAYER J-CART



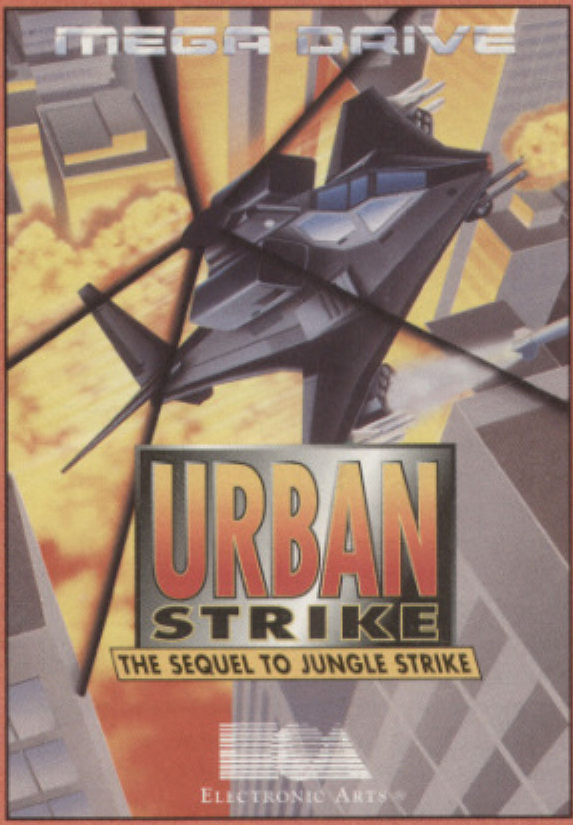
Codemasters



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You stand between New York and the evil forces that have the big apple, San Francisco and Vegas marked down to be Sahara lookalikes. Your mission, which you can hardly turn down, is to inform the sinister king of the information highway, tycoon H.R. Malone that his war machine is his own private road to nowhere. Behind the controls of your lethal attack chopper stacked to the roaters with fire power you will do battle over ten-multi stage missions in the skies above Uncle Sam's major cities. Will you have the courage to leave the protection of one of three new attack craft to fight it out on foot? Where a power-up could mean the safety of America or a split-second could mean armageddon .... Welcome to Urban Strike!

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WORK IN PROGRESS

tee-off



With only mere glimpses of 32X and Saturn stuff so far, don't you think it's time someone revealed a larger glimpse of the future. Steve Merrett is only too pleased to help...



Ordinarily, we wouldn't normally bothering WIPing a Golf game. After all, let's face it, there's only so much you can say about how a shot power bar works and how the courses are put together. Core's Tee-Off, however, is a different kettle of piscines entirely — because, Tee-Off is the Derby-based company's first Saturn project, and we were exclusively invited behind the scenes to witness the next generation in the making.

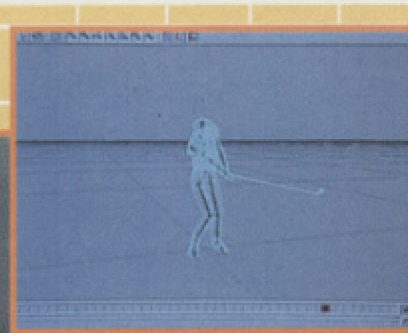
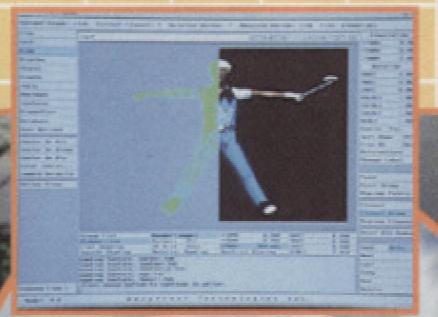
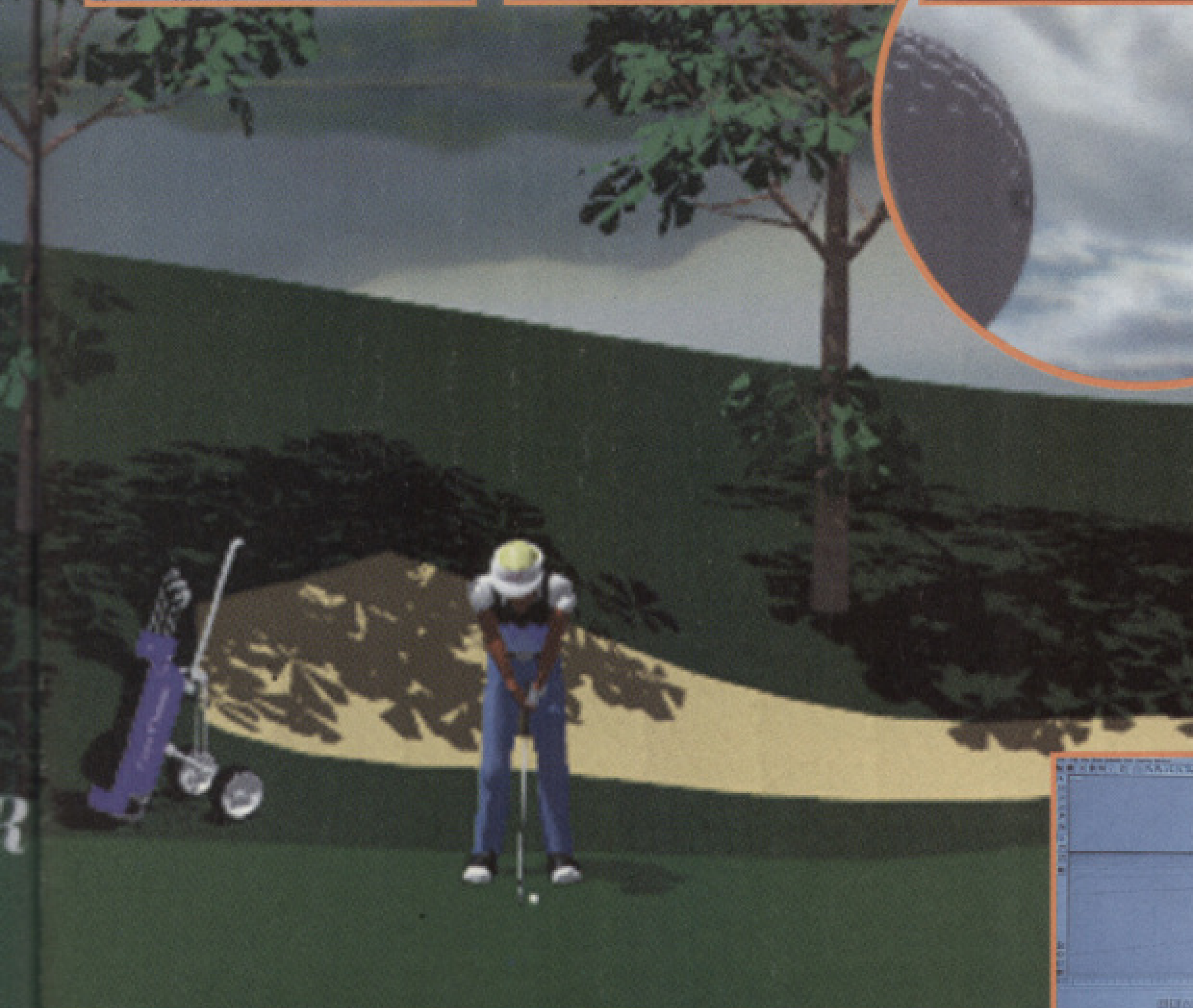
So what could be so radically different about a 32bit Golf game? Well, how about fully rendered courses where everything is shown in the tiniest of detail? The ability to view the course and the thousands of colours used to shade it from any angle? And if they aren't good enough reasons, perhaps because the Saturn hardware allows for extremely realistic animation might do. All these features have been incorporated into Tee-Off's four eighteen hole courses, and Core's overall aim is to create a game which, whilst it looks extremely close to the real thing, also contains the much-needed playability to keep the user interested. So join us as we go were no mag has gone before... into the Saturn Zone (doodeedoo-doo, doodeedodoo).



MOVING STORY

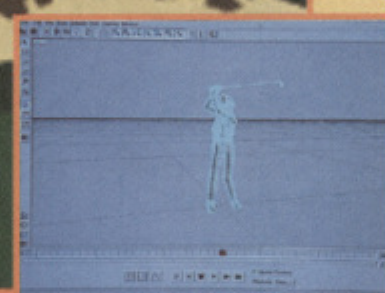
In order to get the players moving as smoothly and realistically as possible, Core are using a skeleton system of wireframes which are then moved frame by frame. 'We took the basic swing movements from a book on how to play golf,' offers graphics artist Jason Gee. 'We resisted taking it from players on the TV as the



WHO NEEDS MODE 7!

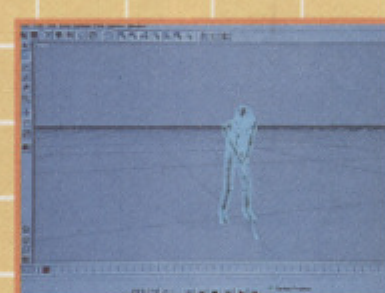
Core's basic aim with Tee-Off is to create a game which is the most realistic looking simulation to date, yet is immediately playable to the golfing novice. Thus, to ensure the game caters for old and new hands alike, Tee-Off features seven styles of play. To get you started, there's a practice mode which takes place across greens selected from the four courses on offer. Similarly, there are tournament, skins, match play and shoot-out modes, and a 'Texas Scramble' feature where speed is of the essence. Finally, would-be Faldos can enter a special 'Core Challenge' which must be completed within a set number of shots. Of course, this doesn't sound that different from the likes of PGA and even Leaderboard. However, every aspect of the game, from the trolley to the detailed trees and backdrops, has been lovingly rendered, and the 32bit machines' power means that the screen follows the ball as it is hit into play adding views even the BBC couldn't rival.



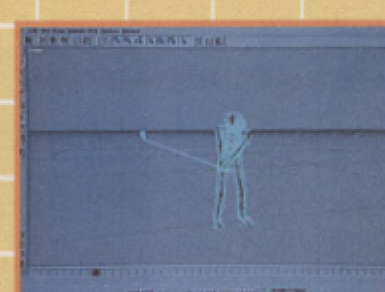
▲ Golf as seen through the eyes of a Predator.



style isn't as consistent, and it also meant we could increase the scale with minimal problems.' The skeletons are pieced together on a Silicon Graphics machine, and beefed up by overlapping the wireframe body with rendered clothing and features. This isn't as slow as it sounds, though, as the Silicon Graphics machine can render a series of sprites in mere seconds, whereas a conventional PC can take hours. 'The only problems we've had so far, though,' adds John Hilliard who's handling the programming duties, 'is that Sega haven't fully completed the design of the Saturn and 32X development systems so we can't see how well it runs on the full system.'



▲ Actually, the above caption is a complete lie. Sorry.



▲ A wireframe pic of a bloke with a club up his bum.



PROJECT
TEE-OFF

PUBLISHER
CORE DESIGN

INITIATED
MARCH '94

RELEASE
NOVEMBER '94

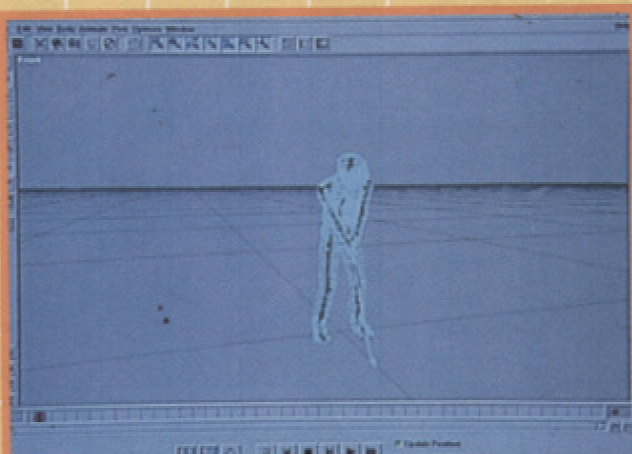
FORMAT
SATURN, 32X

DEVELOPERS
JASON GEE, JOHN HILLIARD

FORE!

It has to be said that there's not a great deal you can do with sound and effects in a golf game! Aside from the usual swishes of club through wind, and thwack of club against ball, there's not a great deal you can do — or is there? 'We're planning to add different sounds for the different clubs, a bit of digitised speech here and there, background noises like birds, wind and trees rustling, and we'll also be adding music for both the title and option screens, and in-game if required,' explains John. Similarly, in order to keep the game as realistic as possible all the way through, as many of the effects as possible will be sampled, something the team are far from looking forward to: 'you try getting worked up about sampling golf noises!'

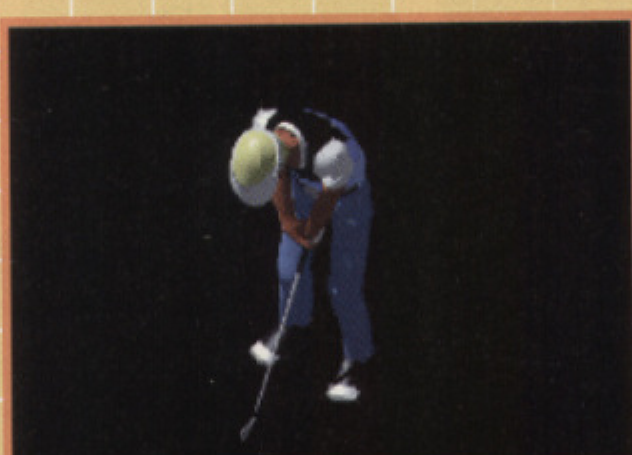




▲ *This isn't the same picture as on the previous page. He's moved a bit to the left. Honest.*

MACHINE CODE

The development systems for the 32X and Saturn are massive blocks of kit which stand nearly two feet tall! Within these devices lurks the boards completed and set to be compressed into the new machines set for release later this year (32X), and late next year (Saturn). However, as of yet, the team have yet to receive the real guts of each system, so a lot of their work is merely in the preparatory stages, with the basic 3D engine up and scaling, a series of stills and animations ready for porting, and the basic courses sketched on paper. The lack of kit is actually getting a little worrying for the duo, though, as Sega are hoping Core will have Tee-Off ready for release at the 32X's launch in November...



▲ *Ooh, ow! Me back has gone and cricked. I'll be stuck like this for ages.*





▲ *The courses can be viewed from any angle. Including from in the hole (Arf)...*





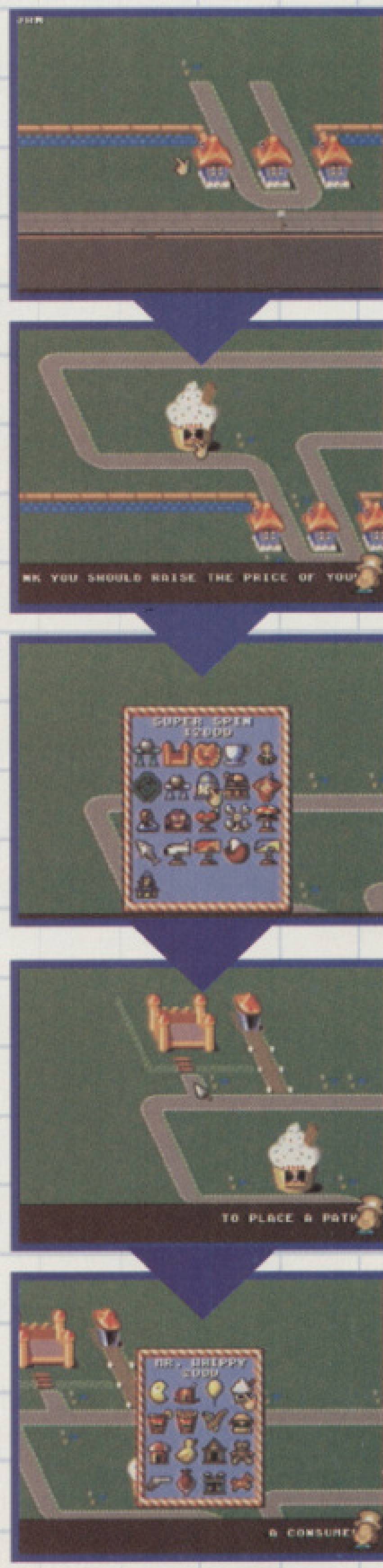


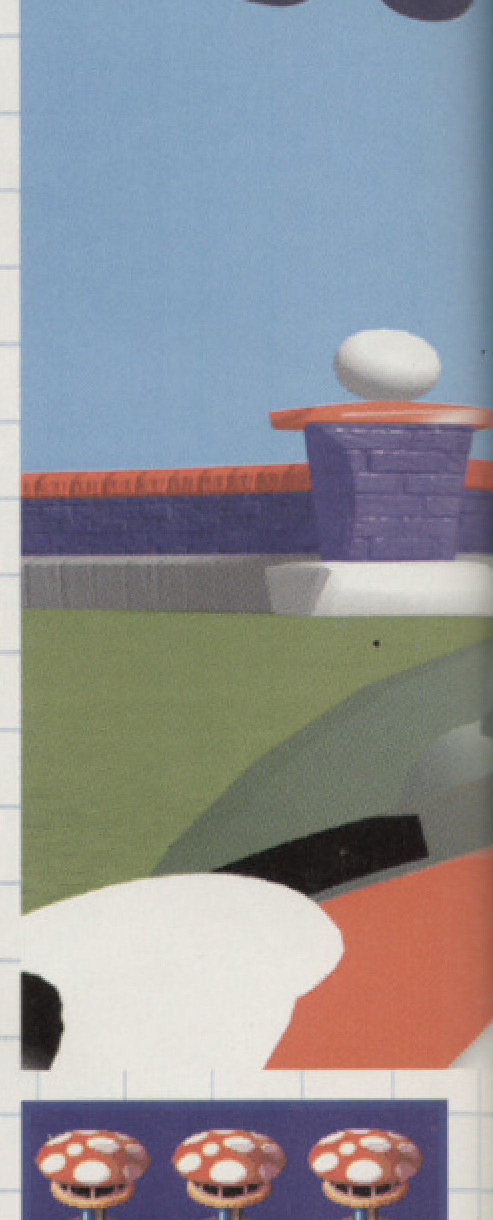

KICK OFF 3
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Challenge
CVG GOLD
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There's more to Kick Off 3 - European Challenge than just hitting buttons and waiting for things to happen.
You control the machine - it doesn't control you.
Can you handle it?
Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough!
GOAL!
J. FRECHET
MEGA DRIVE
SUPER NINTENDO
KICKIN'
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VIC TOKAI
Published by Vic Tokai Europe Ltd, Tokai House, 9 Duncan Close, Moulton Park, Northampton NN3 6WL Tel: 0604 671415 Fax: 0604 670864
Screen Shots are illustrative of gameplay and may vary from format to format
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THEME PA

"Life is just like a merry-go-round, with all the fun of the fair". So sang Sandie Shaw, and who are we to argue? Certainly not Gus, who recently took a roller coaster ride through the development of Theme Park, Bullfrog's new amusement park management game.







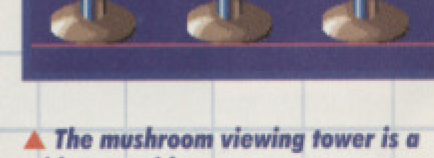
Theme Park is the work of Bullfrog, a respected team of developers who products are both distinctive and innovative. Theme Park is set to offer a completely new gaming experience for the Megadrive, giving players carte blanche to create a fully-working theme park, complete with rides, shops, staff and scenery. Exactly how you construct the park is up to you, but the game has two primary objectives: be the best by winning awards in six park categories — and make money.

Combining the two is not as simple as it may sound.

From these principles Bullfrog have already created a stunning original version of Theme Park for the PC and Macintosh. Its summer release was followed by rave reviews from PC magazines hailing it as an instant classic. But the PC and the Megadrive are very different machines. Although the intention was always to convert the game to console, inevitably some changes have had to be made. Partly these reflect the differences in hardware, but also the expectations of the owners of each machine. Bullfrog are aiming to make Theme Park as involved as before, but with a simpler, more user-friendly interface and zippier gameplay.

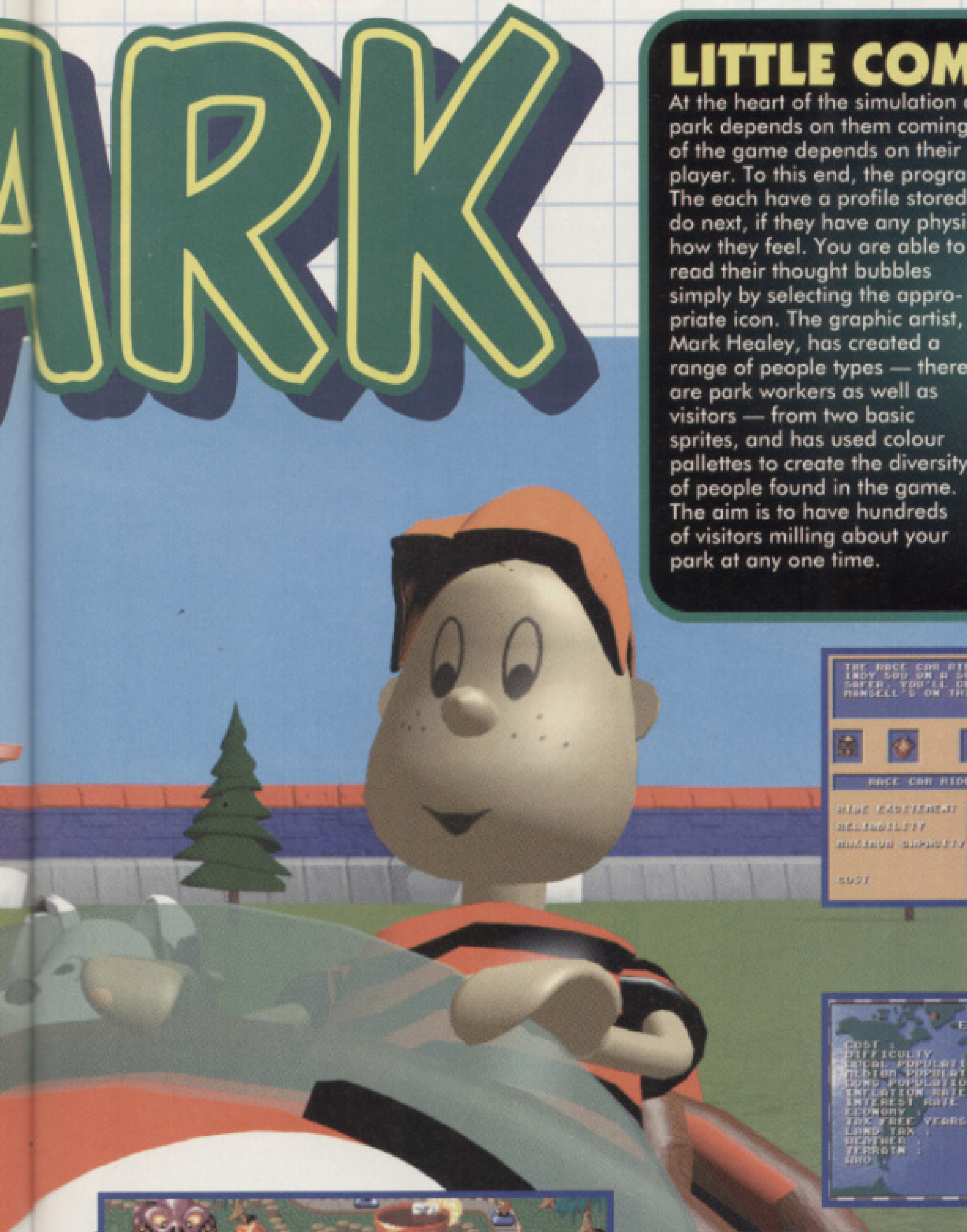
The best bits of the original are definitely staying put, the humour being one example. You are free to watch visitors to your park react to your planning in some hilarious ways. Put too much caffeine in the coffee and watch them go hyper, see them come a cropper on a dangerously-designed big dipper. Some things are out of your hands, though — witness a gang of thugs arriving on scooters, who then proceed to give your staff a good kicking. The attention to detail is mind-boggling.

The overall scenario lets you build a global network of parks, the game becoming more challenging as you progress, but bearing in



▲ *The mushroom viewing tower is a mid-range ride.*

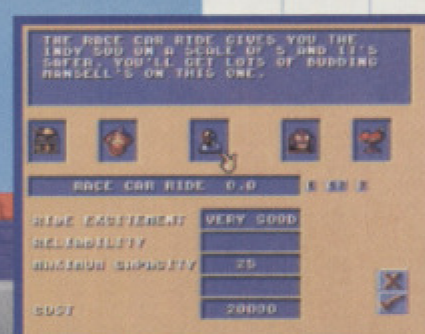




LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE

At the heart of the simulation are the antics of the park visitors. The success of the park depends on them coming in droves to pay the entrance fee, and the success of the game depends on their actions appearing realistic and believable to the player. To this end, the programmers have made each visitor quite sophisticated. The each have a profile stored in memory that determines what they're going to do next, if they have any physical needs, food for example, and most importantly how they feel. You are able to read their thought bubbles simply by selecting the appropriate icon. The graphic artist, Mark Healey, has created a range of people types — there are park workers as well as visitors — from two basic sprites, and has used colour pallettes to create the diversity of people found in the game. The aim is to have hundreds of visitors milling about your park at any one time.





▲ ***Utility screens display player info.***



PROJECT	THEME PARK
PUBLISHER	EA
INITIATED	JANUARY '94
RELEASE	JANUARY '95
FORMAT	MEGADRIVE
DEVELOPERS	BULLFROG



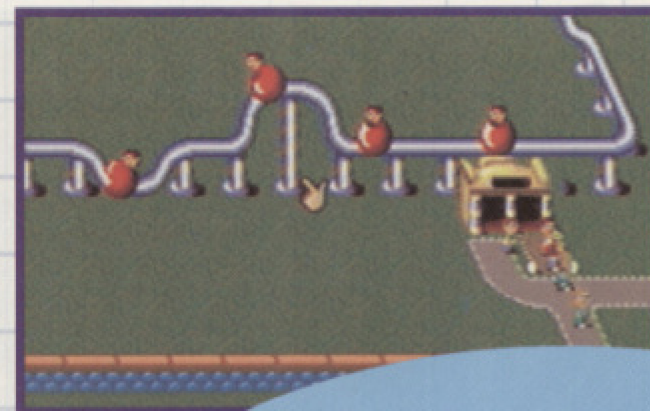


Genesis of a theme park, from a lone ice-cream stand, to a ride and then the punters arrive.

THEME TUNES

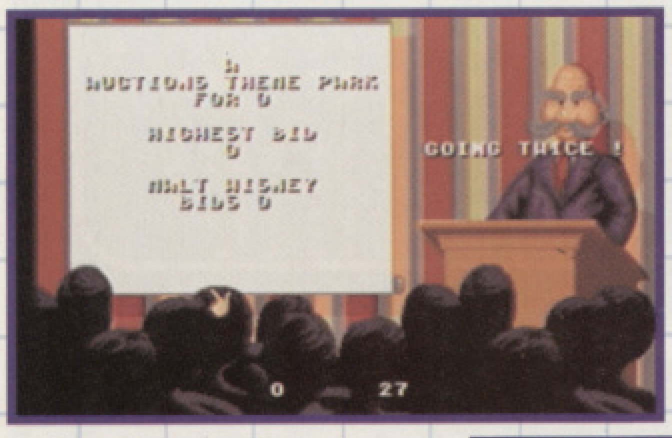
All the sound in Theme Park is the work of Russell Shaw, Bullfrog's resident musician. He spent four months putting the sound together for the original version, and is busily porting over the best for the Megadrive. Around 300K is allocated to sound, which is quite a lot for a 16MEG cart. Russell explains: "all the rides have their own music, which plays when they're on screen. We're also keeping the best of the sampled sounds, which play an important interactive part in the gameplay. For instance, the sound of crying lets you know people are unhappy with your park, whereas laughter is a sign that things are going well. Sound is vital to Theme Park." Russell has access to a huge library of sample CDs, including all those fab effects used in Hanna Barbera cartoons. He's trying hard to maintain the quality of the PC samples, but the data has to be compressed into less space. This means the Megadrive will have a selection of the 50 or so samples found on the PC. "I'd rather have fewer effects of higher quality than cram in loads that sound awful", he confides. To give the park more atmosphere, there is a continual background noise recorded from an actual theme park and looped digitally. Russell's ideas for sound are sparked off from the visual work and concepts he sees the programmers, Andy Beale and Mark Webley coming up with. When the idea of making the guests throw up arose, Russell created the perfect wretching noise to accompany it!



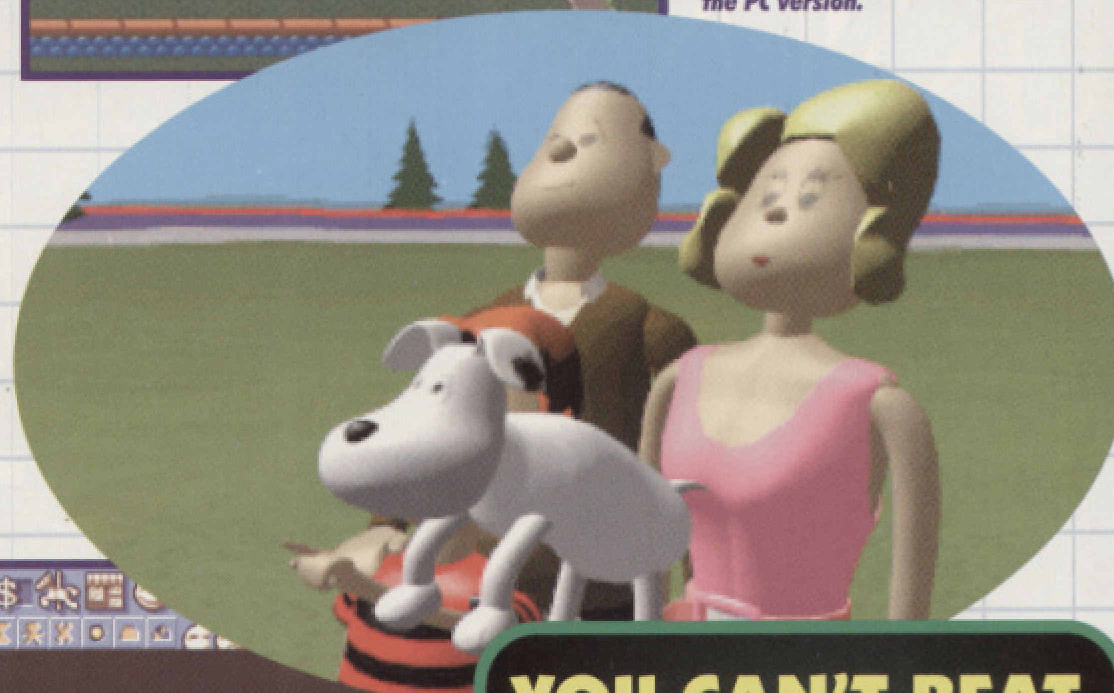


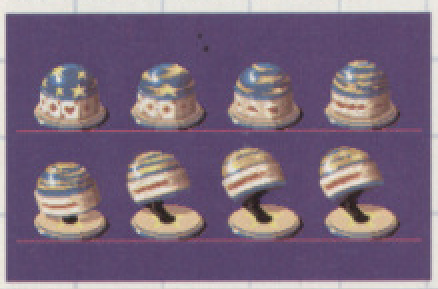


▲ *The Ghost train survives intact from the PC version.*



▲ *The auction screen is a way to make a fast buck on your park.*



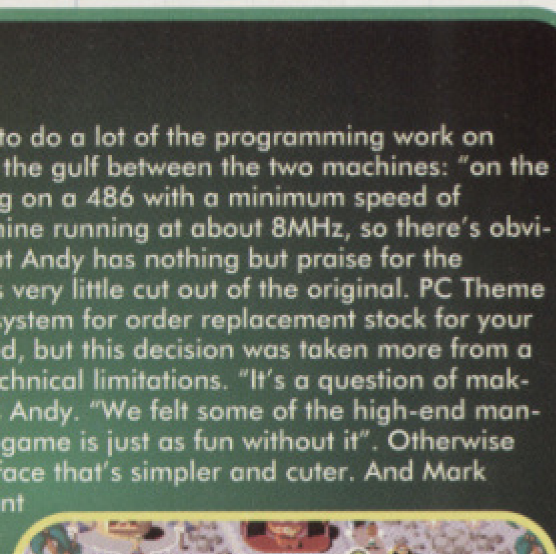


▲ *Progressive animation cells of the Space Spinner.*



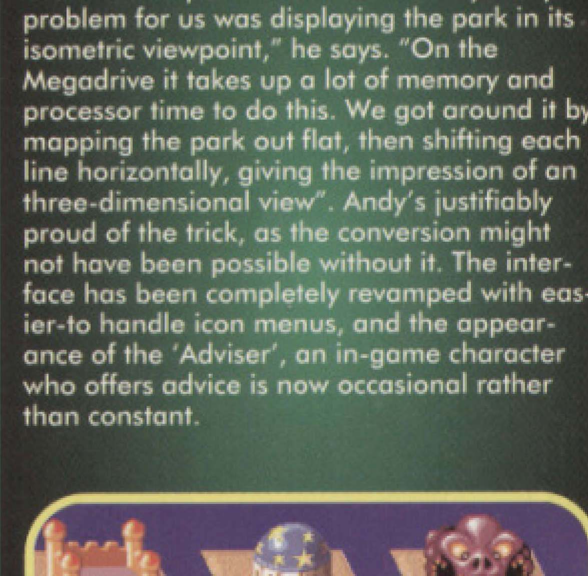
PC CORRECT

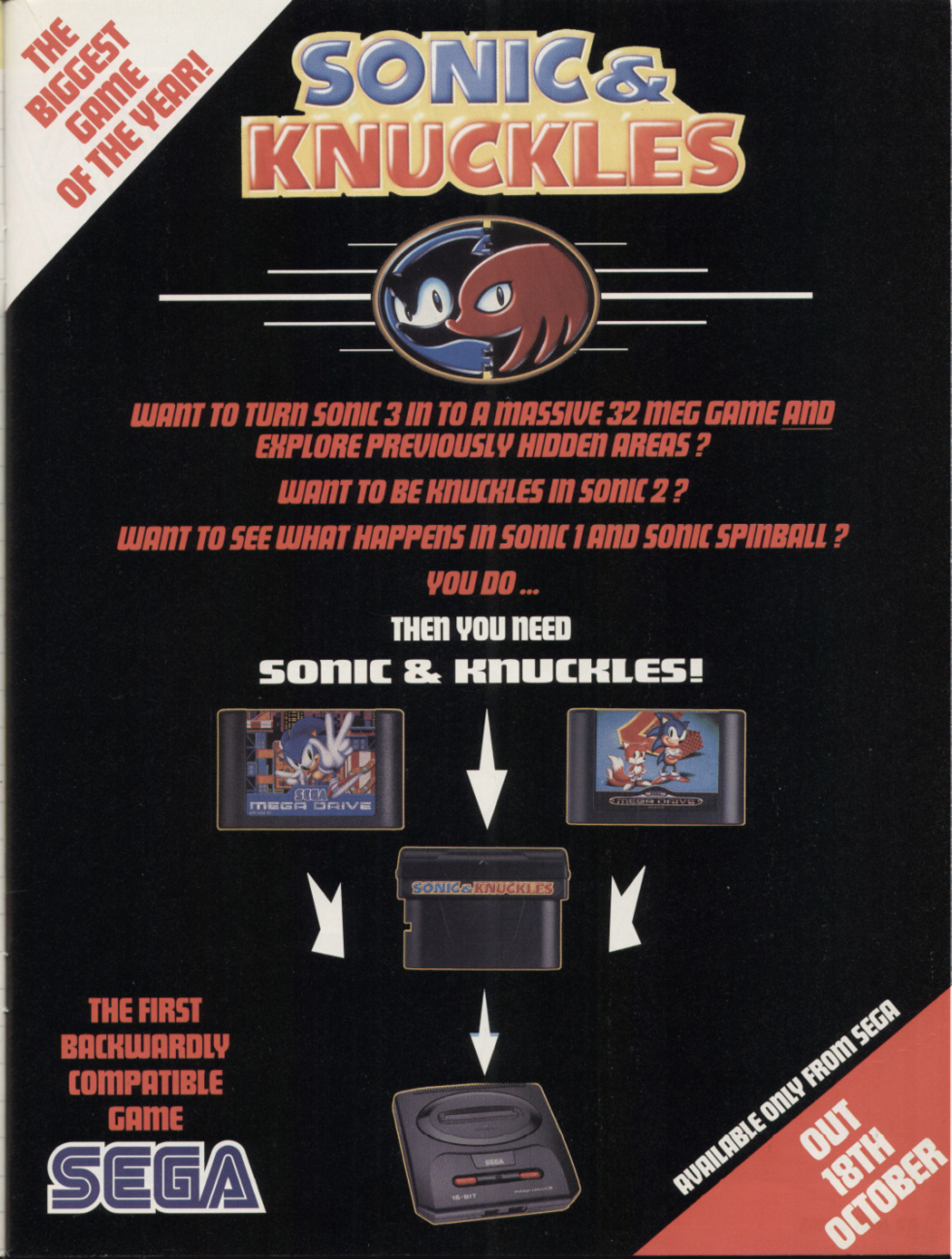
Lead programmer Andy Beale has had to do a lot of the programming work on Theme Park from scratch. He illustrates the gulf between the two machines: "on the PC you had to have Theme Park running on a 486 with a minimum speed of 33MHz. I'm working with a 16-bit machine running at about 8MHz, so there's obviously going to be some adjustment". But Andy has nothing but praise for the Megadrive, and suprisingly says there is very little cut out of the original. PC Theme Park had a share-buying option and a system for order replacement stock for your shops, both of which have been dropped, but this decision was taken more from a gameplay viewpoint than because of technical limitations. "It's a question of making the game right for the format", says Andy. "We felt some of the high-end management stuff was a bit heavy, and the game is just as fun without it". Otherwise it's all there, but with a revamped interface that's simpler and cuter. And Mark Webley, head of conversions, is confident that there will be additions made to the game. "They'll almost definitely be more rides than the twenty five or so offered on the PC. We're also going to keep some rides specifically for some parks, as an incentive to play further into the game. There will also be different scenic backdrops — like snow and desert, created by changing the graphics pallette. The Megadrive is actually a neat machine for doing things like that".



YOU CAN'T BEAT A BIT OF BULLY

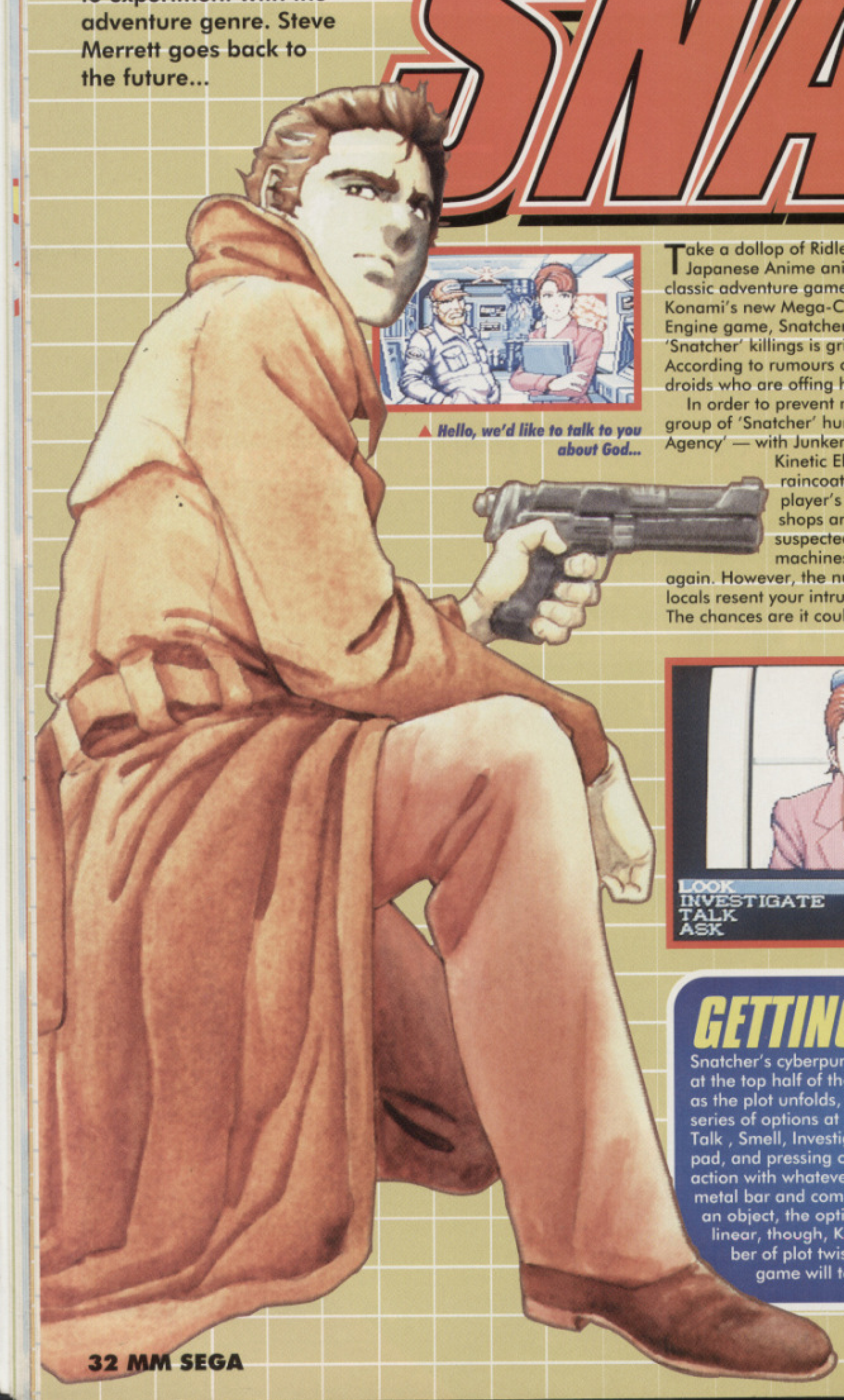
Surprisingly, the main task for the programmers to grapple with has been the game presentation, the graphics and interface, rather than the mechanics of running the Theme Park engine. All the graphics have been completely re-written, and Andy prefers them over the computer versions. "A really tricky problem for us was displaying the park in its isometric viewpoint," he says. "On the Megadrive it takes up a lot of memory and processor time to do this. We got around it by mapping the park out flat, then shifting each line horizontally, giving the impression of an three-dimensional view". Andy's justifiably proud of the trick, as the conversion might not have been possible without it. The interface has been completely revamped with easier-to handle icon menus, and the appearance of the 'Adviser', an in-game character who offers advice is now occasional rather than constant.




THE BIGGEST GAME OF THE YEAR!
SONIC & KNUCKLES
WANT TO TURN SONIC 3 IN TO A MASSIVE 32 MEG GAME AND EXPLORE PREVIOUSLY HIDDEN AREAS ?
WANT TO BE KNUCKLES IN SONIC 2 ?
WANT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS IN SONIC 1 AND SONIC SPINBALL ?
YOU DO ...
THEN YOU NEED
SONIC & KNUCKLES!
SEGA
MEGA DRIVE
SONIC & KNUCKLES
THE FIRST BACKWARDLY COMPATIBLE GAME
SEGA
AVAILABLE ONLY FROM SEGA
OUT 18TH OCTOBER

With more platform heroes behind them than the days of Glam Rock, Konami are about to experiment with the adventure genre. Steve Merrett goes back to the future...

SNATC

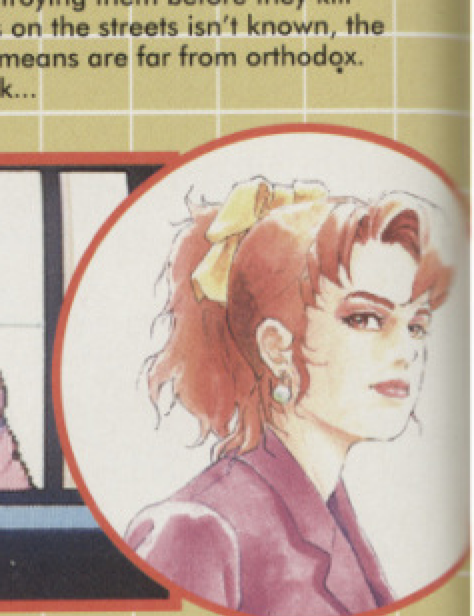


▲ *Hello, we'd like to talk to you about God...*

Take a dollop of Ridley Scott's Blade Runner, mix in a serving of Japanese Anime animation, and finish it off with a lump or two of classic adventure games, and you're on your way to the recipe for Konami's new Mega-CD release. Converted from the original PC Engine game, Snatcher is set in the year 2047, and a spate of 'Snatcher' killings is gripping the dark underworld of Neo Kobe City. According to rumours on the crime circuit, 'Snatchers' are rogue killer droids who are offing humans and adopting their victim's identities.

In order to prevent more slaughter, the authorities have banded a group of 'Snatcher' hunters under the collective title of a 'Junker Agency' — with Junker an acronym of Japanese Undercover Neuro-Kinetic Elimination Ranger. Stepping into the grubby raincoat of a newly-recruited Junker called Gillian, the player's task is to gain information from the local bars, shops and known villain regarding the whereabouts of suspected snatchers, before hunting the vicious machines down and destroying them before they kill again. However, the number of droids on the streets isn't known, the locals resent your intrusion, and your means are far from orthodox. The chances are it could be a long task...





GETTING TO GRIPS

Snatcher's cyberpunk city is shown as a series of animated scenes at the top half of the screen. Anime-style characters come and go as the plot unfolds, and interacting with them is effected via a series of options at the bottom of the screen. Instructions such as Talk , Smell, Investigate and Use can be highlighted using the joy-pad, and pressing one of the three control buttons performs the action with whatever is on screen. For instance, if you are holding a metal bar and come across a puzzle which could logically use such an object, the option will be highlighted. If this sounds a little too linear, though, Konami have ensured that the game has a number of plot twists and turns so if your action is incorrect, the game will take a different route.





▲ *"Spare us 50p for a cup of tea, Guvnor?"*









PROJECT
SNATCHER

PUBLISHER
KONAMI

INITIATED
APRIL '93

RELEASE
JULY '94

FORMAT
MEGA-CD

DEVELOPERS
KONAMI JAPAN

LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE

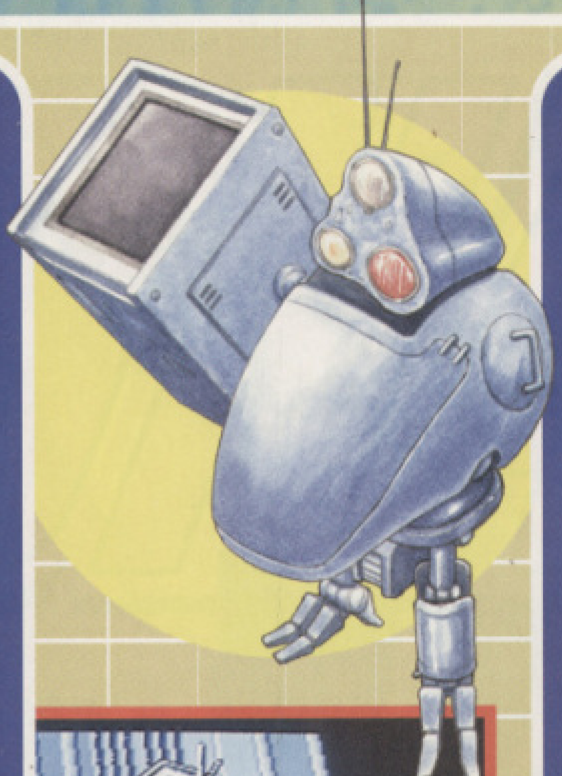
According to Konami's development team, it will take eight hours for the player to make their way from the start of the game to the end — and that's providing they don't make any mistakes. The team's aim was to create a Blade Runner-style arcade/adventure for the Mega-CD, and they certainly seem to have captured the moody atmosphere of Ridley Scott's classic film — even down to the violence. The Snatchers are vicious machines who act innocently enough until they are rumbled, after which a fully-animated fight is shown. Destroying the robots is far from simple as they often catch you unawares, and will kill you without hesitation. One perfect example is when the player investigates a female victim's flat in search of clues. As the player rifles through her possession and collects as many items as possible, the Snatcher sneaks up behind the Junker and tries to strangle him! Thus, you have mere seconds to work out how to stay alive! Similarly, other sections take the form of a cursor-controlled shoot 'em up section with the player blasting away the approaching cyborgs — and this section is fully Justifier-compatible!

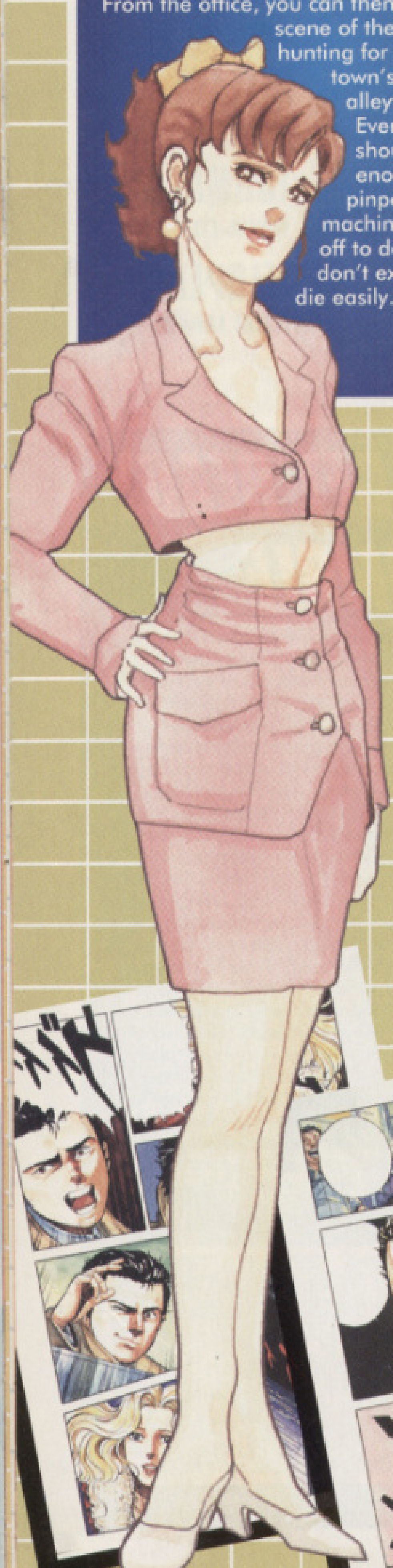


NEW JUNK CITY

The Snatchers are virtually indistinguishable from the humans they have killed, and the only way to locate the bio-mechanical monsters is by interrogating local hoods for details on suspects. Starting at the Junker officers, the player is given a selection of leads which can be followed in any order. From the office, you can then travel to the scene of the crime and start hunting for clues in the town's bars, clubs and alleyways.

Eventually, you should amass enough clues to pinpoint the machine before setting off to destroy it — but don't expect them to die easily...





SOUNDING OFF

Konami's main aim during the development of Snatcher was to create the closest thing to an interactive movie. As such, the game makes the most of its CD medium by cramming enough animation into the story to make Akira resemble an episode of Rocko's Modern World. The sound is also of equal quality, with a brooding soundtrack accompanying the action, and speeding up when the fights begin. Using the PC Engine game as a basis, Konami's programmers sketched and profiled every character within the game in order to give them rounded lives and individual personalities, commissioning a Snatcher comic in the process.



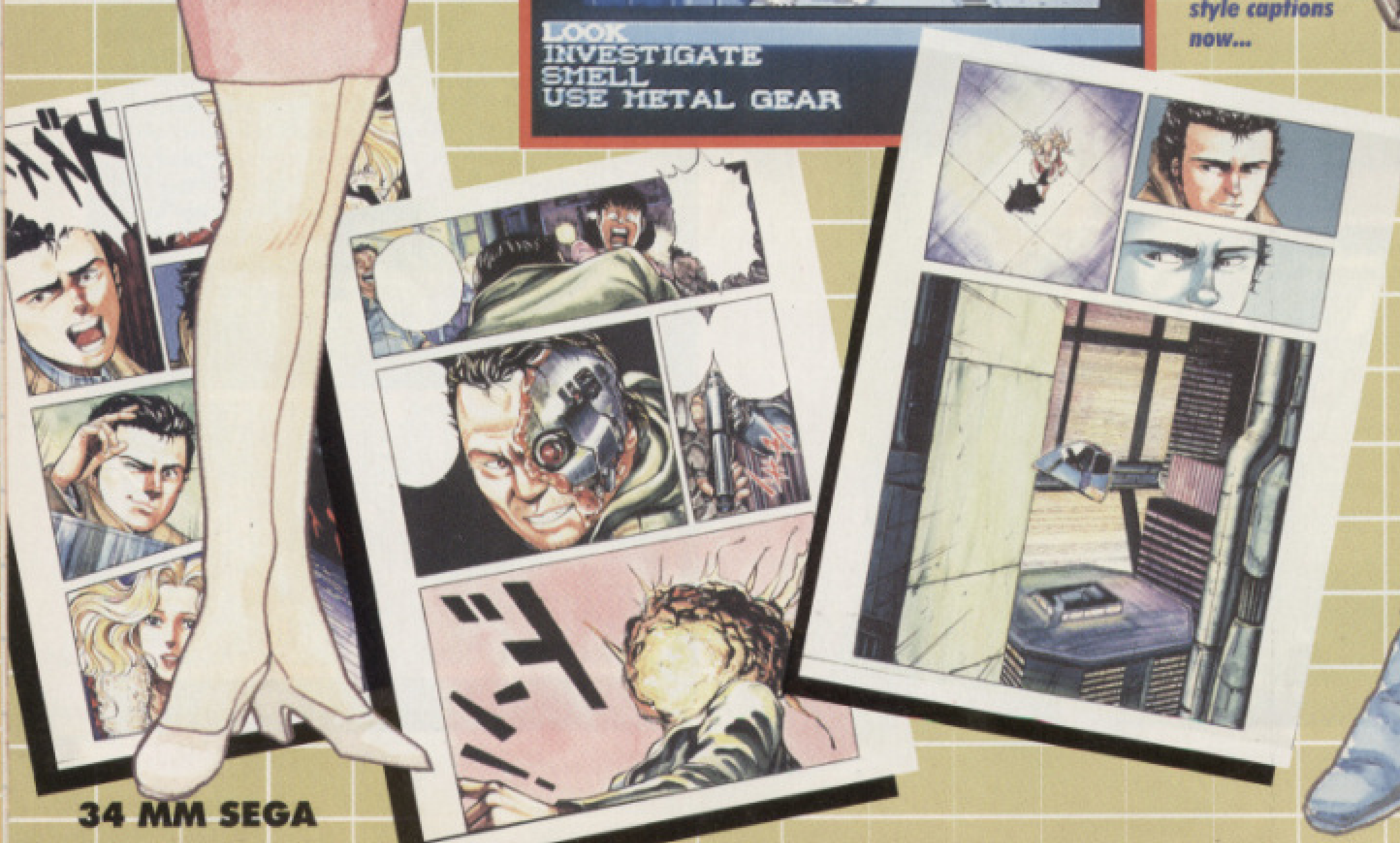


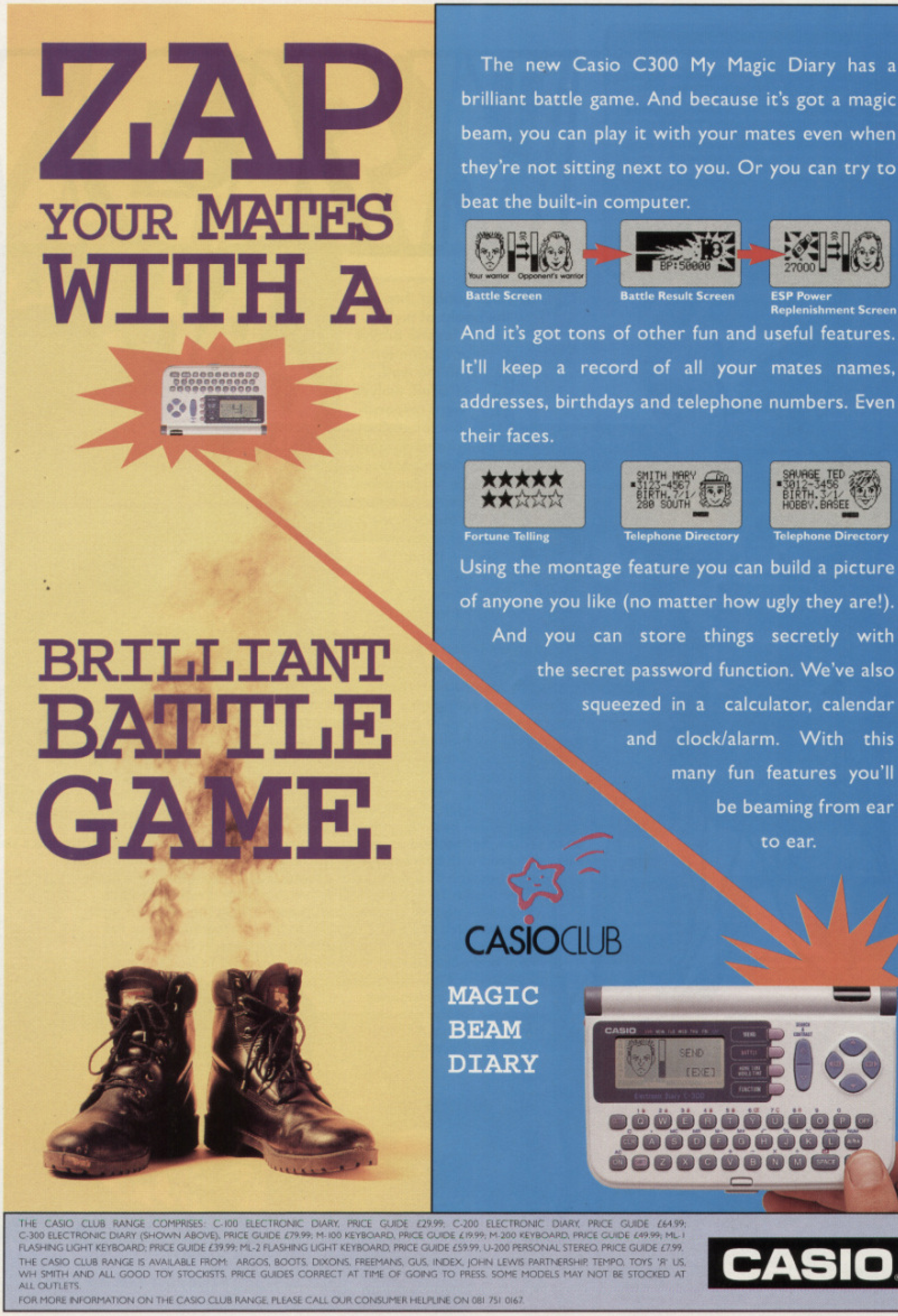
◀ *Let's get back to an old-style MMS caption... A squat robot yesterday. Ho-ho!*



◀ *Er, mind the decimated sewer corpses, Marlon. Titter.*

▼ *Mind you, it's funny how everyone else is doing these style captions now...*




ZAP YOUR MATES WITH A BRILLIANT BATTLE GAME.
The new Casio C300 My Magic Diary has a brilliant battle game. And because it's got a magic beam, you can play it with your mates even when they're not sitting next to you. Or you can try to beat the built-in computer.
Your warrior
Opponent's warrior
Battle Screen
Battle Result Screen
ESP Power Replenishment Screen
And it's got tons of other fun and useful features. It'll keep a record of all your mates names, addresses, birthdays and telephone numbers. Even their faces.
Fortune Telling
Telephone Directory
Telephone Directory
Using the montage feature you can build a picture of anyone you like (no matter how ugly they are!). And you can store things secretly with the secret password function. We've also squeezed in a calculator, calendar and clock/alarm. With this many fun features you'll be beaming from ear to ear.
CASIOCLUB
MAGIC BEAM DIARY
THE CASIO CLUB RANGE COMPRISES: C-100 ELECTRONIC DIARY, PRICE GUIDE £29.99; C-200 ELECTRONIC DIARY, PRICE GUIDE £64.99; C-300 ELECTRONIC DIARY (SHOWN ABOVE), PRICE GUIDE £79.99; M-100 KEYBOARD, PRICE GUIDE £19.99; M-200 KEYBOARD, PRICE GUIDE £49.99; ML-1 FLASHING LIGHT KEYBOARD; PRICE GUIDE £39.99; ML-2 FLASHING LIGHT KEYBOARD, PRICE GUIDE £59.99, U-200 PERSONAL STEREO, PRICE GUIDE £7.99.
THE CASIO CLUB RANGE IS AVAILABLE FROM: ARGOS, BOOTS, DIXONS, FREEMANS, GUS, INDEX, JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP, TEMPO, TOYS 'R' US, WH SMITH AND ALL GOOD TOY STOCKISTS. PRICE GUIDES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. SOME MODELS MAY NOT BE STOCKED AT ALL OUTLETS.
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE CASIO CLUB RANGE, PLEASE CALL OUR CONSUMER HELPLINE ON 081 751 0167.
CASIO

1 PLAYERS	
16 MEG	
RELEASE	DECEMBER
BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM
PERCENT COMPLETE	

WOL



A quick gander through the books of myth and legend proves our fascination with the wolf. After all, wolves were responsible for saving Romulus and Remus from the wilderness. Romulus eventually building the city of great civilisation, Rome. Mowgli, of Jungle Book fame, was adopted by a pack of wolves, and brought up as one of their own. But in recent centuries, stories of silver bullets, metamorphosis, and young girls found dead, have given the wolf a bit of a bad press.

In the great tradition of all superheroes, Wolverine – crime fighting agent par excellence – has a history shrouded in mystery and unanswered questions. A mutation of man and beast, Wolverine, aka Logan, was found originally with superhuman healing powers and heightened senses. Recognised as an asset to the Canadian armed forces, Wolverine's skeleton was reinforced with a virtually indestructible metal known as adamantium.

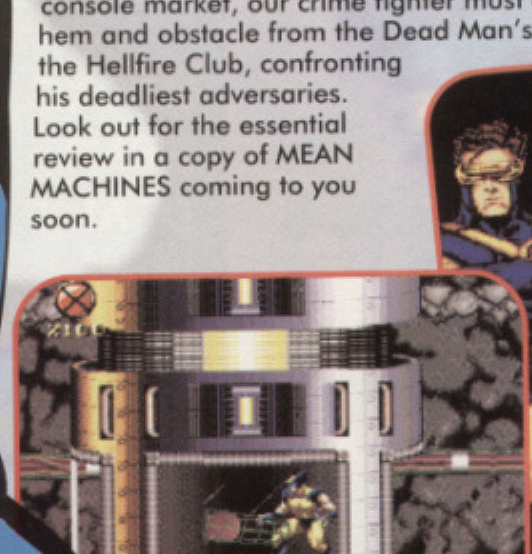
The combination of superhuman powers, super strength, and a skeleton tougher than a Terminator T-800, has lead to Wolverine heading the battle against crime disorder, confronting the meanest and leanest batch of super criminals. In this, his first outing on the console market, our crime fighter must cover six levels of mayhem and obstacle from the Dead Man's Land to the Hellfire Club, confronting his deadliest adversaries. Look out for the essential review in a copy of MEAN MACHINES coming to you soon.







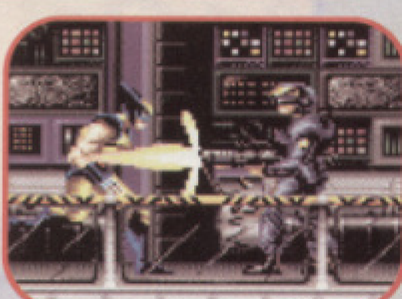


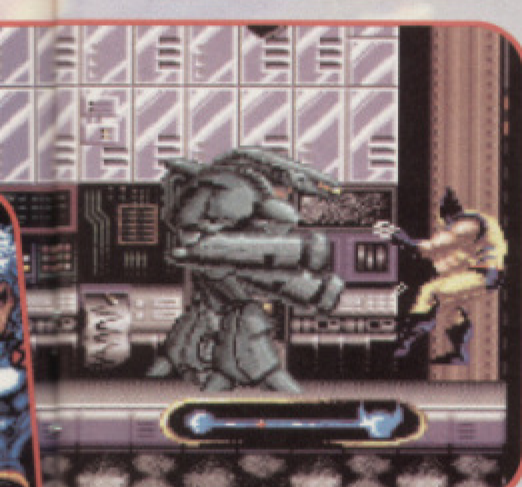


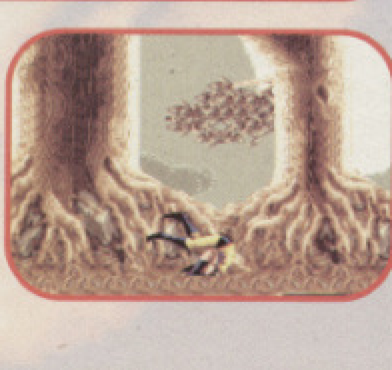
▲ *If I could just reach that lever...*

VERINE









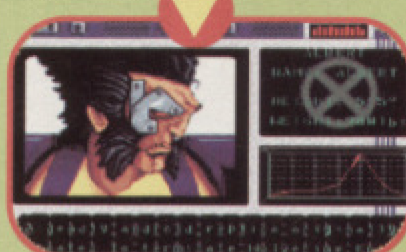


BAD EGGS

To be a superhero crime fighter you need a large stock of baddies to constantly do battle with. Wolverine certainly has the monopoly on really evil, devious, good-fer-nothing criminal activists. Judge for yourselves.

ALBERT

Originally created to destroy Wolverine but since destroyed Albert is an android replica of his mortal foe. A jack of all trades.



BLOODSCREAM

Vicious vampire who strips people of their psychic energy. With his razor sharp talons and fangs, he is a dangerous character.



CYBER

Another adamantium clad warrior, capable of inflicting damage with no effect to himself.



FITZROY

A time tripper of criminal proportions. Steals the lifeforce of others to generate his experiments.



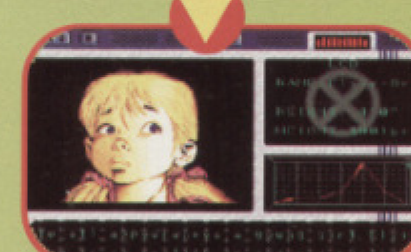
LADY DEATHSTRIKE

Unstable cyborg expert in the samurai art of Kenjutsu. Another adamantium-laced foe with foot long claws!



LCD

A little girl in appearance, but beneath the tiny frame is a powerful android, packed full of explosives.



LURKER

A 'Hunter From Darkness', once rescued from the Canadian wilderness by Wolverine. Now wants to terminate him.



SABRETOOTH

One of Wolverine's greatest opponents. Very similar in attributes, and looking to finish our lupine hero.



SHINOBI SHAW

A morph-monger of the highest proportions, deadly combatant, and able to slip through walls and floors.



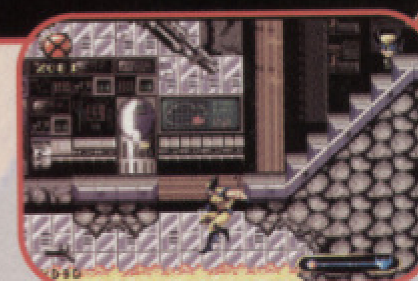
WOLVERINE: THIS IS YOUR LIFE

Real Name:Logan
Occupation:Adventurer; Captain in Canadian armed forces, assigned to intelligence (retired)
Identity:Secret, known to certain members of the Canadian government
Legal Status:Citizen of Canada, now permanent resident in the United States
Former Aliases:Weapon X
Place of Birth:Unknown
Marital Status:Single
Known Relatives:None known
Group Affiliation:X-Men
Base of Operations:Professor Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, Salem Center, Westchester County, New York

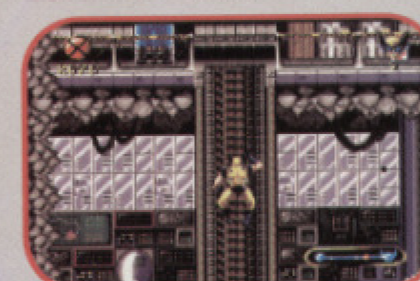








▲ *"Hmm, strange orange carpet," muttered Wolverine.*



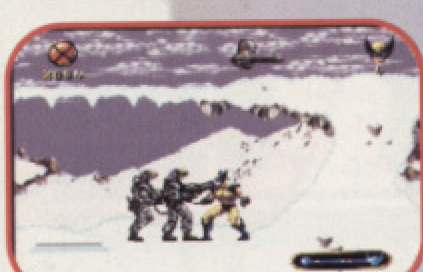
▲ *"Gotta find a loo quickly. My bum's playing tortoises..."*







▲ *"Anyway, after the widget ads the work just seemed to dry up..."*







▲ *Damn those nasty polished floors.*

ANT MUS-HEE-ECK!

The source of Wolverine's power is the metallic skeleton implanted in hius body. No other creature would have been able to withstand the extremely dangerous operation, but thanks to his mutant origins, Wolverine concentrated his healing powers in order to survive. Adamantium was first developed by American scientist Dr Myron MacLain, but the process of bonding it to bone was stolen from Japanese scientist Lord Dark Wind. A Dr Hudson perfected the formula, and after accidentally wounding Logan (Wolverine) whilst hunting, decided to use him to test the theory without knowing the consequences.


SOULSTAR
Blasting back the boundaries of the gaming experience, SOULSTAR captivates up to two players with out-of-this-world 3D graphics, a multi-morphing combat craft and fast and furious gameplay. Fly, drive and shoot your way through more than twenty incredible missions in a progressive, space shoot-'em-up that beats all the others!
"A shoot-'em-up of epic proportions, Soulstar takes you on a roller coaster ride of supreme blasting action."
"Soulstar certainly looks like a contender for Mega-CD game of the year."
MEGA POWER
Available on:
Mega-CD
CORE
DESIGN LIMITED
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55 Ashbourne Road Derby DE22 3FS Telephone (0332) 297797 Facsimile (0332) 381511
SEGA™
MEGA-CD

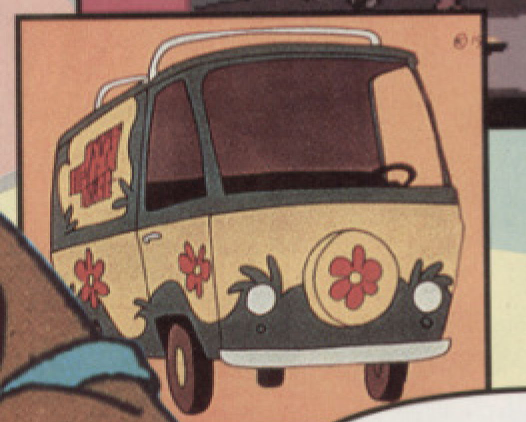
PLAYERS	1
MEG	16
RELEASE	TBA
BY	ILLUSIONS
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	ADVENTURE

PERCENT COMPLETE

SCOO



You could get away with things in the 1970s that you wouldn't imagine now. Take, for example, four young people driving about in a painted Bedford van with a talking dog. Today we'd label them New Age Travellers and call the police — but back then they were the police! More accurately, they were the feisty young investigators of Scooby Doo.

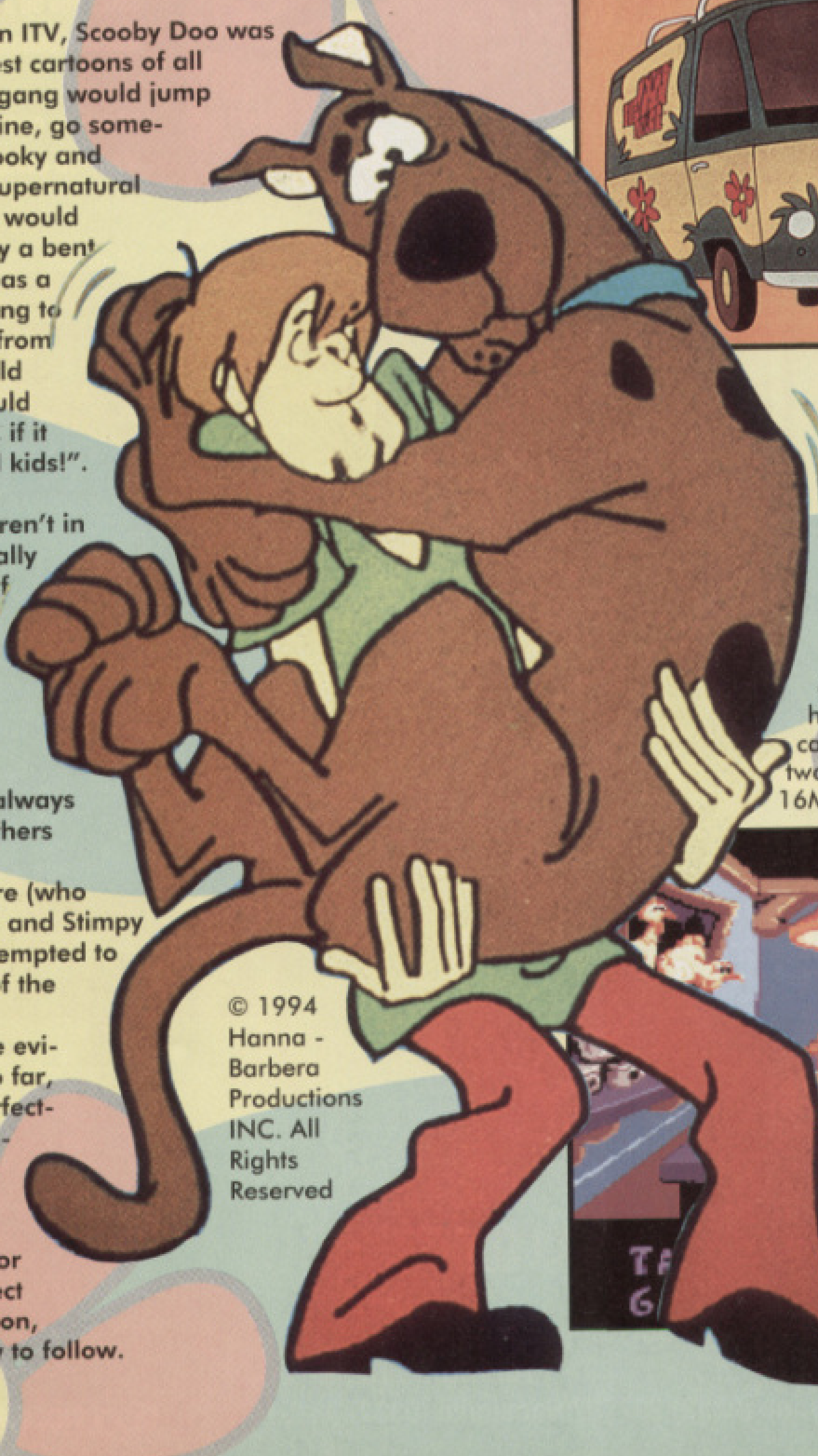




Now being reshown on ITV, Scooby Doo was basically one of the best cartoons of all time. Every week, the gang would jump into the mystery machine, go somewhere remote and spooky and believe they'd had a supernatural experience. Then they would discover it was actually a bent pensioner dressed up as a monster, who was trying to scare everyone away from his stash. And he would always say "and I would have got away with it, if it wasn't for you darned kids!". Superb.

The real mysteries weren't in the plots. What we really wanted to know was if Daphne and Fred ever got their legover, why Velma never got contact lenses, and why they always agreed to split up (Shaggy and Scooby always got chased, but the others never did).

Now Illusions Software (who wrestled with the Ren and Stimpy conversions) have attempted to capture the essence of the classic show in a Megadrive game. The evidence is promising so far, and the Scooby is perfectly suited to the adventure genre. As of yet, however, nobody in the UK is lined up to release it. Not even for a Scooby Snack. Expect this to be resolved soon, though, and a review to follow.



Scooby Doo is an icon-driven adventure, styled like Lucasarts' Monkey Island games for the PC and Amiga. Shaggy and Scooby wander round a plethora of locations, picking up objects, legging it from monsters and trying to solve the mystery. It's a tough game to crack, but lightened by the frequent humour of the text and the fact the graphics capture the look of the show so well. There two adventures on the cart, bringing it to a 16Megs : Carnevil and Blakes' Hotel.







SCOOBY DOO WHERE ARE YOU!









Scooby's play area is split into two halves: the top bit showing Shaggy and Scoob examining each stage's cartoon-style locations, whilst the bottom part contains a list of possible commands. The programmers have managed to capture the essence of countless Scooby Doo cartoons, with the pair getting into chases with ghosts and bad guys (including a brilliant corridor chase!), eating huge, stacked sandwiches, and generally stumbling across the answers to clues. Getting them into these scrapes is simplicity itself, too. Using the B button to summon a cursor, our bungling heroes can be made to open, shut, examine, pick up and give items, and combinations of these can be created — ie. 'give chilli to cook.' Be warned, though, some of the solutions require an understanding of the cartoon's humour.





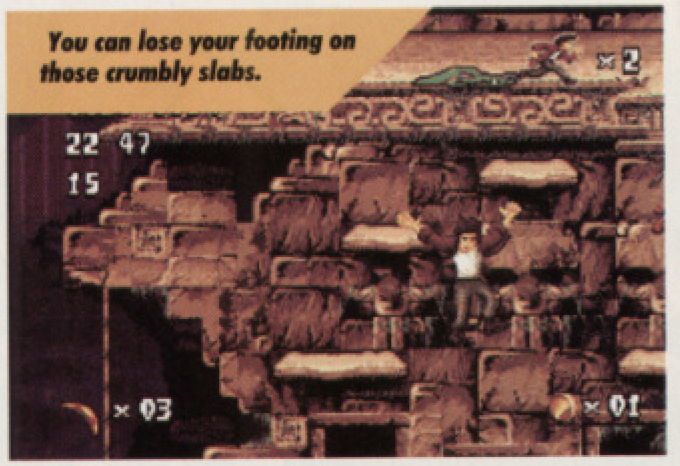


1 PLAYER

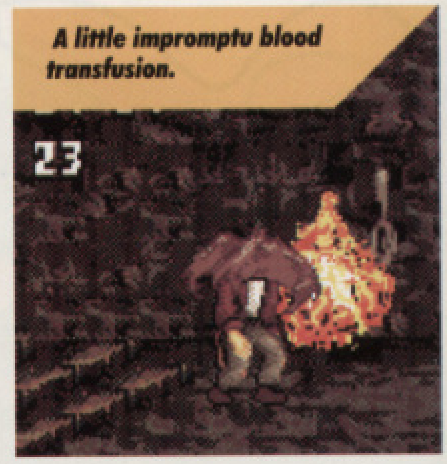
16 MEG

RELEASE	NOVEMBER
BY	ACTIVIEION
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM

PERCENT COMPLETE



You can lose your footing on those crumbly slabs.



A little impromptu blood transfusion.



PITFALL
THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

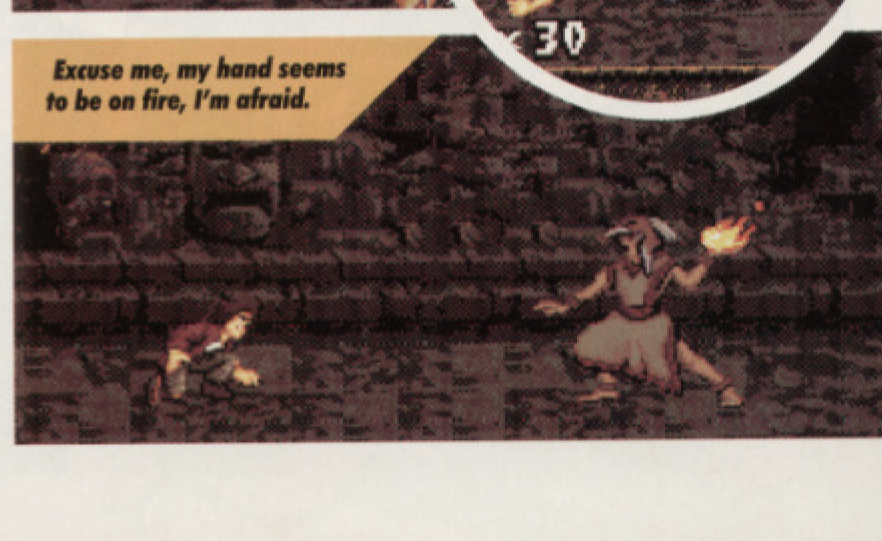
The rumbling of the jungle drums at EMAP Towers announces the forthcoming release of Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure, Activision's first major UK release for the Megadrive. Obviously intending to make a big impression with their first title, they've chosen to update one of the most successful games of all time, and tart it up with the help of a top sound studio and movie animator.

Pitfall centres on the rainforest capers of Harry Jnr. an explorer in the Indiana Jones mode, who has picked up the adventuring spirit from his father. Pops himself has been captured by an evil Mayan spirit, which has also possessed the wildlife across the ten scrolling levels of waterfalls, forest paths, cliffs and torchlit temples. Going to the aid of dad forms the basis of the game, which features some novel, and more familiar aspects of the platform genre: you may be used to rope-swinging, but have you ever bungee-jumped in a video game before?

Initially, the game attracts attention with its lavish graphics. Densely packed foliage, multi-layered parallax and about as many colours as you'll see on the Megadrive at any one time. Animation also has a high profile, hundreds of frames employed for Harry himself, and all the work of the studio behind Ferngully, the environmentally-friendly kid's feature set in the Amazon.

Pitfall swings onto the shelf in November, nobody is going to accuse it of being ugly, but how will the gameplay fare? Read MEAN MACHINES next month for the review scores and more.


The horrific attack of the Mayan cake tin.


Excuse me, my hand seems to be on fire, I'm afraid.

GETTING EVEN WITH DAD

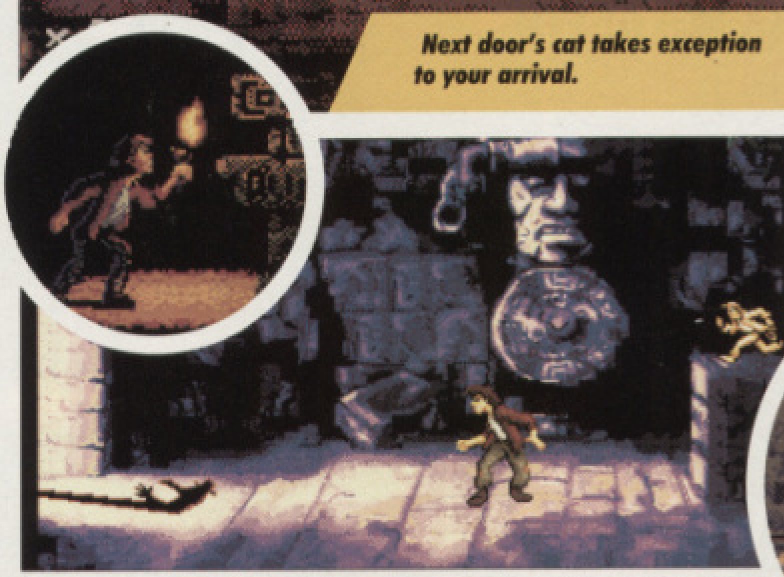
The original Pitfall game was programmed in 1982 by David Crane (of Activision) for the Atari VCS system. Not strictly a 'platform' game, it had 100 flick screens of jumping action, was bigger and more complex than anything the system had seen before, and was one of the best games of the time, frankly. Additionally, it all came on an 8K ROM cartridge. Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure takes up 16Megs of space (256 times the size of the first), and has the entire first game programmed in as a secret level. However generous this may seem (and indeed it is!), the memory used for this purpose is less than that used to store the frames of animation showing Harry running. When Harry Jnr. does locate his father, the programmers thought it would be a joke to show him in the simple pixilated form of the first game.



Time for an underwear raincheck.



Next door's cat takes exception to your arrival.



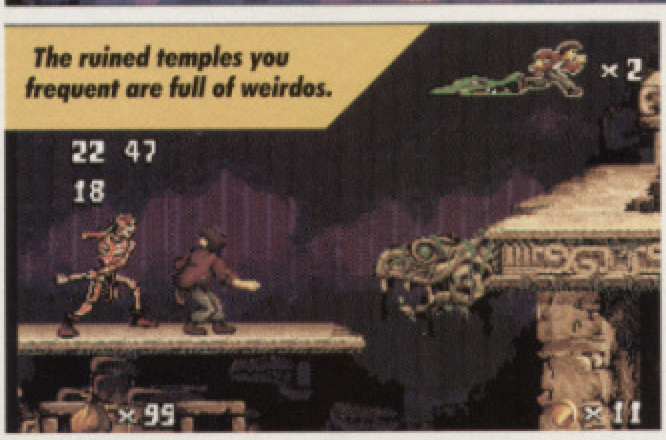


The Waterfall level has long rope swings.

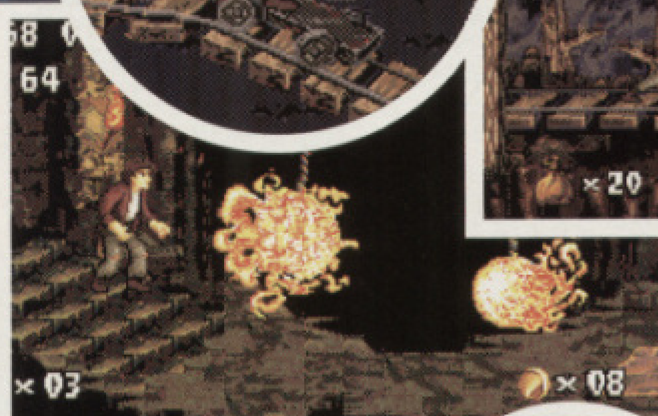


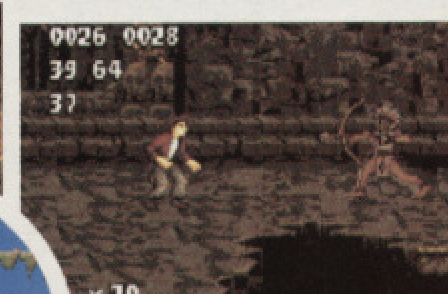


Blinkin' train strikes. I'll run one meself.



The ruined temples you frequent are full of weirdos.









MOONLIGHT AND MUSIC

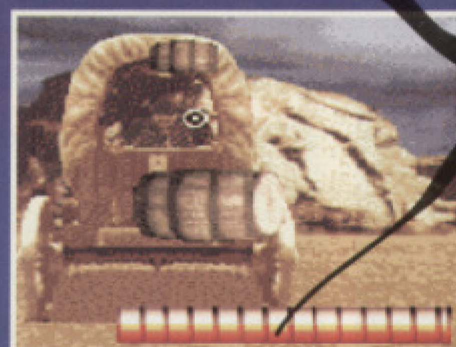
Pitfall is another indication of how the games industry is using the accumulated talents of the movie industry to improve technical standards. The visual qualities of Pitfall can be put down to the work of Kroyer Films, the animators of Ferngully. Their President, Bill Kroyer has worked on previous innovations like Disney's Tron. He was assisted by Brian McEntee, responsible for Art Direction on Beauty and the Beast. Sound effects and music were engineered by Soundelux Media Labs, who used vocal, instrumental and animal samples. Their expertise has been honed on countless movies, from Cliffhanger to Home Alone.

LETHAL Gun

1-2 PLAYERS	
16 MEG	
RELEASE	JANUARY
BY	KONAMI
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	SHOOT 'EM UP

PERCENT COMPLETE





The year is 1873 and the west is at its wildest. Assorted renegade cowboys spend their time shooting each other, drinking brown-coloured alcohol, shooting each other again, and robbing a few banks. Law is a hard thing to enforce in such a barbaric age, but Konami are challenging you to ride into town and blow a little respect into these said villains — ensuring you don't hole a few civilians in the meantime. Yup, it's Lethal Enforcers time again, and this time they've bought their ranch...

Abandoning the assorted terrorist scenarios of the original, Lethal Enforcers II drops the player in the middle of bank robberies, stage coach hijacks and othersuch typically western scenarios. Armed with your trusty six-shooter, the aim of the game is virtually identical to that of the first, with the player plugging the baddies before they shoot back, whilst simultaneously collecting extra weapons and bonuses. Accurate shooting and the protection of innocent passers-by then translates into promotion from the player's initial humble role as a freelance posse member and up to the rank of Sheriff and all-round good guy.

Lethal Enforcers II: Gun Fight is currently planning to ride into town early next year, so join us as we saddle up for the full review in the next few months.







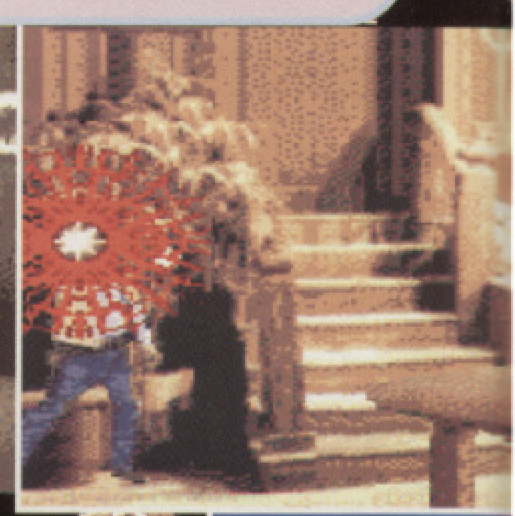
HOWDY PARDNER

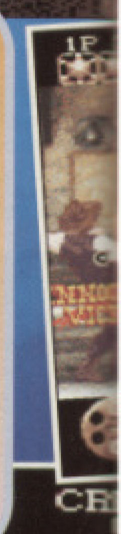
Each stage is broken up into a series of smaller sub-levels with the player wiping out a predetermined number of bad guys before moving on to the next. As with the first game, both the backdrops and the sprites have been digitised to add a 50s movie feel to the proceedings, and the bad guys pop up in windows, directly in front of the player, and through doors as they attack with a vast selection of guns, axes, and knives. Similarly, as the game progresses more western cliches such as stage coaches, scalp-hunting red Indians and a gold mine are thrown into the plot, with each stage culminating in a huge battle against the level's boss.



JUSTIFIER MY LURVE...

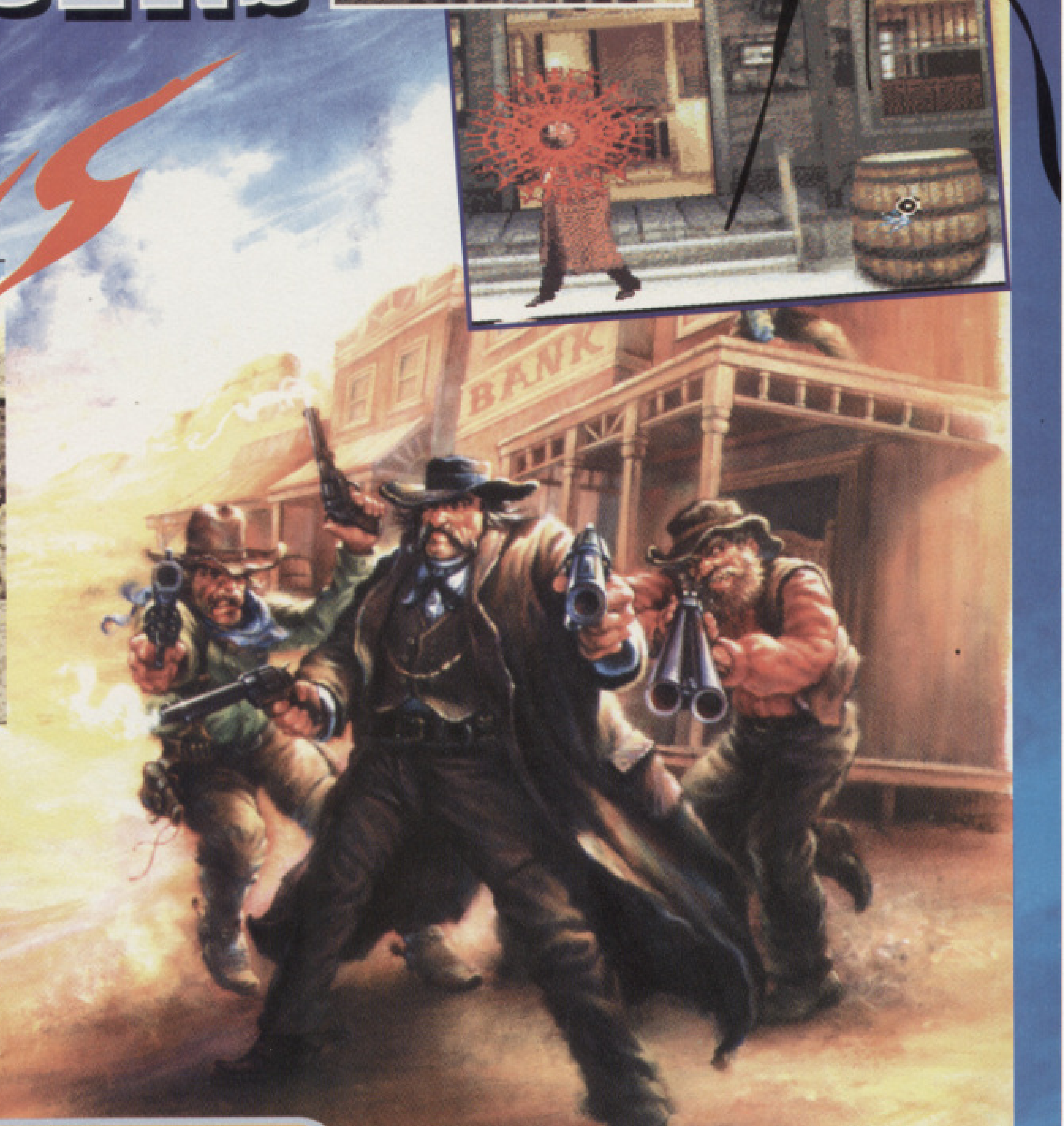
Anyone who splashed out on the original Lethal conversion will no doubt have a gaudy blue gun lying around waiting for action. Well, fear not Justifier fans, as Konami have ensured that Lethal II is fully compatible with the brightly-coloured sharp shooters. For those of you who can't take such excitement, though, a joypad will do the job just as well with the A button used to fire and the C button reloading a spent gun.





ENFORCERS II Fighters











GO FOR YER GUN

Initially, the player is armed with a paltry six-shooter which, whilst effective, needs constant reloading. However, every now and then a glowing icon appears on screen and, when shot, is added to the player's inventory at the bottom of the screen. The most basic of these is an icon which temporarily gives the player a second gun, whilst the more destructive amongst you will relish the chance to polish off a few cowboys using a cannon and a rapid-firing Gattling gun!





SYNDICATE

PLAYERS	1
MEG	16
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
BY	BULLFROG
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	STATEGY

PERCENT COMPLETE

Crime doesn't pay. Yeah, and playing with yourself makes you go blind. We all know lots of little glib statements like that which fail to match up with real experience. For some, crime isn't just a way of getting money, it's a career. That position aptly describes your character in Bullfrog's promising new strategy/ action game, Syndicate.

The producers of the ground-breaking Populous, and the highly-complex wargame Powermonger, have created a nightmare future of global corruption, where corporations rule over nation states, and the line between lawful and illegal is very faint indeed. As head of a crime syndicate, your task is to expand operations across the globe — split into 50 large territories, controlled by other syndicates.

Each territory houses a problem for your syndicate, and consequently you send a team of your hoods to shake up the neighbourhood. Sometimes this means an assassination, an abduction, or even a bloodbath to wipe out an opposing syndicate. Once you have control, you may tax your new population, and use the proceeds to strengthen your own team.

Syndicate was a massive hit on the Amiga in 1993, which set it up nicely for the PC, Macintosh and now console conversions, all of which capture the essential elements of the original. Bullfrog have re-written the game entirely, with new missions for every sector and a revamped control system, making your syndicate cyborgs easier to control. More immediately interactive than Bullfrog's previous releases, Syndicate is their most Megadrive-friendly title to date. Catch the review in MEAN MACHINES next month.



▲ *Trumpton: 2047AD. Windy Miller makes a fatal discovery...*

CHIP SHOP

The shiversome cyborgs under your control are civilians who have been abducted and 're-programmed' by the syndicate. With a chip inserted in their necks, they obey commands to move and kill, either alone or in a group of up to four. You may also modify your crew by replacing body parts with manufactured components, thus improving their performance.

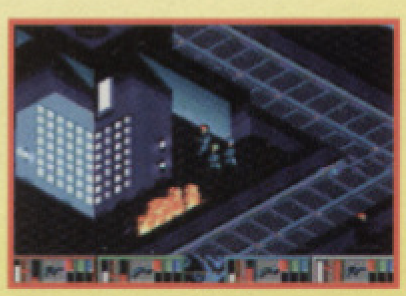




▲ *"The chip shop? Yeah, take a left at the Lloyds bank, and cut through the grave yard. It's just off to the left next to the deli..."*

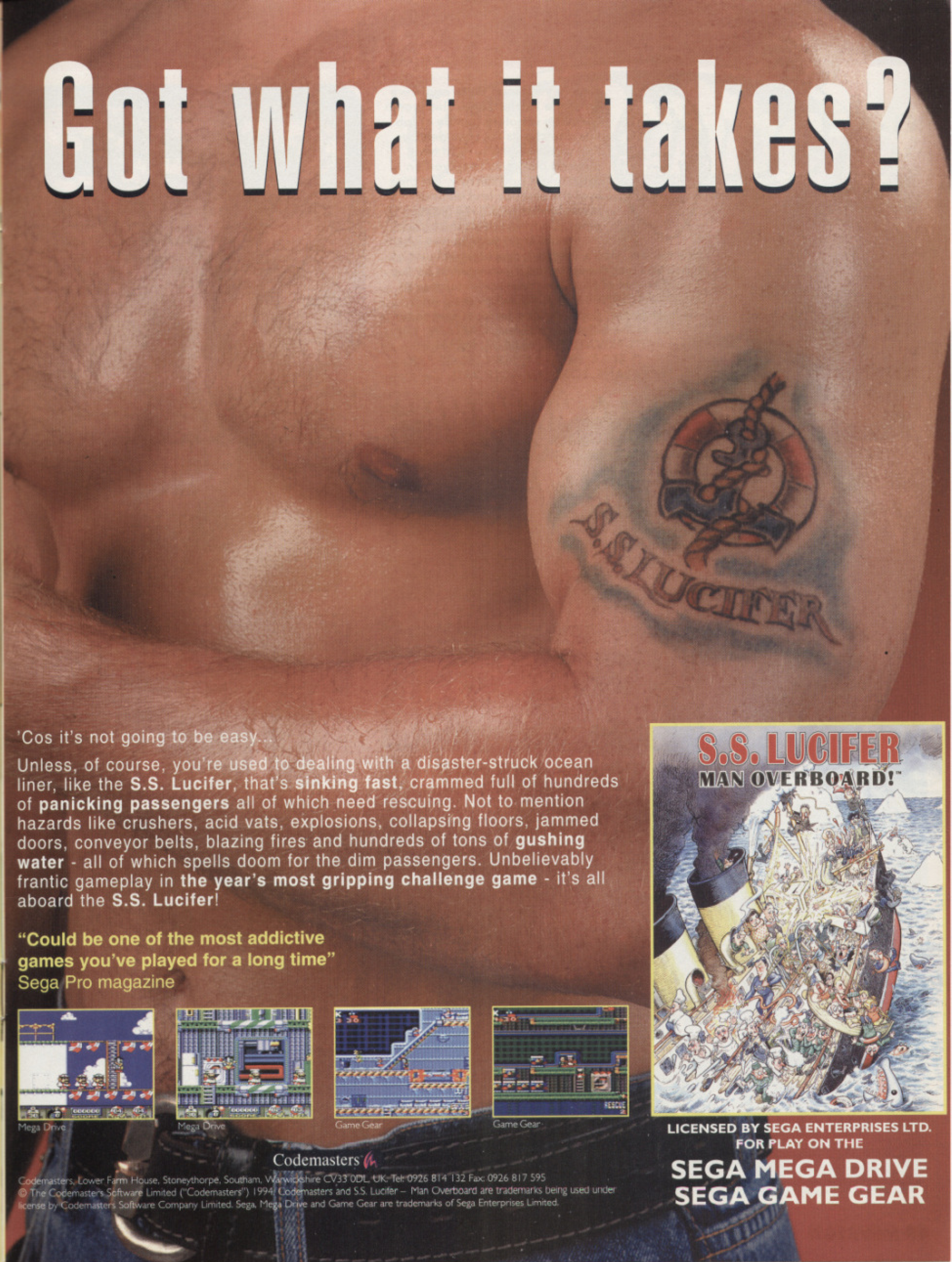


▲ *Oi, put that bloody fire, you little hooligans.*

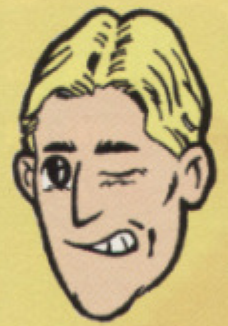


RETINAL SCANS

The look and feel of Syndicate ties in with the development of the Cyberpunk idea. Incorporating Blade Runner, William Gibson's novels and graphic novel series like Shadow Run, it paints a view of a vicious, gloomy, but hi-tech future, set in decaying urban territories. The buildings, weapons and styling of Syndicate are all in character. There is a scene-setting intro in rendered graphics depicting your syndicate's shady activities.


Got what it takes?
S.S. LUCIFER
'Cos it's not going to be easy...
Unless, of course, you're used to dealing with a disaster-struck ocean liner, like the S.S. Lucifer, that's sinking fast, crammed full of hundreds of panicking passengers all of which need rescuing. Not to mention hazards like crushers, acid vats, explosions, collapsing floors, jammed doors, conveyor belts, blazing fires and hundreds of tons of gushing water - all of which spells doom for the dim passengers. Unbelievably frantic gameplay in the year's most gripping challenge game - it's all aboard the S.S. Lucifer!
"Could be one of the most addictive games you've played for a long time"
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PAULS TIPS



Hey, hey tipsters! Once again we enter the *Tipster Zone*. This month we've an absolute bundle of fab tips and cheats for your delectation plus two (that's right two!) player's guides to keep you on the straight and narrow. But time is of the essence and without much further ado, let's get tipping! (Copyright Naff Intros, Inc).

Woah! Hold your horses just one minute. Don't, I repeat, don't forget to whisk those tips and cheats to me if you want to be the proud owner of two shiny new carts courtesy of MEAN MACHINES SEGA. Scrawl your tip on a piece of paper, pop it in an envelope, and zoom it to me at the following address, CAPTAIN CRUMPET'S PRIVATE TIPS PARADE, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

LAST MONTH'S WINNER

Our generosity knows no bounds, as the winner from last month will be receiving two superb carts. Paul Shotton from Stoke-on-Trent, Acclaim's Mortal Kombat II and Accolade's fantastic Ballz are both winging their way to your doorstep. Well, they will be when they're out. Hurrah!

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

HIDDEN MANAGER GAME

Congrats to Andrew Barnes of Maidenhead for this tip to access the manager game. On the joypad selection screen, simply leave both controllers in the centre and after a couple of ticks, you will be able to change the set-up of the team and even the substitutes! Superb.







SUPER OPTIONS!

This month it's a double-helping of tips thanks to Paul Shotton from Stoke-on-Trent. His second offering this month tackles those blokes on skates. To access the hidden options firstly spell out BADASS (B, A, DOWN, A, START, START) on the warning screen and if it has worked you will hear a 'smashing' sound. Now enter any of the following codes in any combination:



THE SPEED UP TRUTH!

I'm here to set the record straight once and for all! There is absolutely no need to mess around with any key presses to speed up the action. All you have to do is press right on the GAME START screen, and you can bump the speed up to four whole stars! Hooray!

WIZ 'N' LIZ

YOUR VERY OWN FRUIT STALL AND LATER LEVEL CODES

To take yourself all the way to the top, writes Chris Broomfield from London, simply type in the password HSSN RLLL. With this entered, you should have 100 stars and the shop door opened. Pop into the shop and buy a banana and a potato. Leave the shop, mix them together and the hint shop door should appear. Enter this shop and use up all of your stars, go crazy! When you leave the shop, stand under the door, but hold down C. You'll notice after leaving the hint shop, you now have 65, 526 stars, and with this cash, you can have your very own fruit stall.

FINAL LEVELS

If you fancy trying out some of the later levels here are a couple of codes.
Super Wizard Level – TRKQ QMSC
Sorcerer Level – HSSN RLLL

ARMOR – Player gets Grade 5 equipment.
MONEY – Player gets $2000.
SPEED – Gives Player 3 Nitros.
THRASH – Player gets best weapons (Bat, Whip, and Stun Rod).
BEACH – San Diego level.
BRONCOS – Denver level.
CAPITAL – Washington level.
CARS – Detroit level.
HILLS – San Francisco level.
JAYS – Toronto level.
LIBERTY – New York level
PALMS – Miami level.
PIZZA – Chicago level.
STARS – Los Angeles level.
TOTEM – Vancouver level.

OutRunners



HIDDEN CAR

Although available only on import at the moment, Chris Ward from Wigan has sent in a cheat to drive the Virtua Racing car in the game. On the title screen, enter LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, B, C, A, and there should be a little noise to inform you it's worked. Now choose the Arcade mode and on the car selection screen, the Virtua Formula car appears.

SHINING FORCE 2

CONFIGURATION MODE, SOUND TEST, CHOOSE DIFFICULTY, AND CHANGE CHARACTER NAMES!

Is there no stopping Stoke-on-Trent's tipping wonder Paul Shotton? This month he enlightens us with some gems for a gem of an RPG.

CONFIGURATION MODE

To access this mode, as soon as the SEGA logo appears, quickly press UP, DOWN, UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, UP, and B. You will hear a short tune if it has entered correctly. Now hold START to whiz through the witches options, and choose to start a new game or continue. The witch should now enter you into configuration mode where Turbo Speed, Auto Battle, Control Your Enemies, or Complete The Game options can all be accessed.

SOUND TEST

Use the Configuration mode to complete the game, reset, and begin a normal game. Select your CONTINUE file and immediately hold START and UP, and press C. A witch will offer you a sound test.

CHOOSE DIFFICULTY

Once again use the config mode to complete the game. Reset and start a new game. After you have named your character, a game difficulty option materialises.

CHANGE CHARACTER NAMES

You guessed it, it's config time yet again! But afterwards, once you've started a new game and you've chosen a character name, highlight EXIT on the NAME ENTRY screen and press A whilst holding START. Another character should instantly pop on screen and you can re-name the entire Shining Force troop!

MEGADRIVE

STREETS OF RAGE 3

SPECIAL MOVES

This baby has certainly caused a stir in the gaming community. Issue 23 of MMS had the hidden characters and select option, but this month I have the hidden special moves thanks to Patrick Bayliss from Dumbartonshire. Bear in mind you need a six button joypad to perform these

ZAN

Multiple Blitz move – X and UP/LEFT twice

SKATE

Skate towards and jump kick – X and DOWN/RIGHT twice
Skate towards and flash kick – X and BACK, UP/LEFT, and UP in one continuous motion

BLAZE

Stationary attack but longer jump – X and FORWARD, UP RIGHT, and UP in one continuous motion
Additional sliding sweep – X and anti-clockwise semi-circle from DOWN to UP

AXEL

Stationary attack, but circle move instead of dragon smash – X and DOWN, DOWN/RIGHT, and RIGHT in one continuous motion.
Dragon punch – X and an anti-clockwise semi-circle from LEFT to RIGHT

PGA TOUR GOLF 2

POTS OF CASH!

A cheeky little tippet from Nick Fisher of Swindon. To rise straight to the top of the table with absolutely oodles of cash. Firstly pick a Skins tournament for two people. Choose any course and start the game. When it's your go, pick up your ball and your opponent's. Keep doing this until the eighteenth hole. At this hole, play your first shot, then when it's your opponent's shot, make him pick up his ball. Now all you have to do is finish the hole and you win all 18 skins and the money. This cheat is particularly nasty if you borrow somebody else's cart, build up an amazing score and wipe theirs. Now as if you would.

MICRO MACHINES

INFINITE LIVES, FASTER VEHICLE, AND TOUGHER OPPONENTS

While many are fervently awaiting the arrival of the sequel, I thought it would be nice to take some time to pay homage to the original. Thanks to Nazam from Rotherham, we can take a jaunt down memory lane.

Infinite Lives – PAUSE, B, DOWN, C, DOWN, UP, DOWN, LEFT, DOWN, and START
Faster Vehicle – PAUSE, UP, DOWN, A, B, LEFT, RIGHT, C, and START
Tougher Opponents – PAUSE, LEFT, DOWN, UP, DOWN, RIGHT, DOWN, A, DOWN, and START

JUNGLE STRIKE

LEVEL AND CO-PILOT CHOICE

It must be sequel season at the moment as here's another classic series with the latest version just about to hit the stores (check out the reviews section for the lowdown on Urban Strike). A big 'cheers' goes out to Gerard Hanratty from Co. Louth in Ireland for these codes.

LEVEL SELECT

Take the code 4SJY7S6FB6 and add the following letter to the beginning for the appropriate level:
Level 2 – R
Level 3 – 9
Level 4 – V
Level 5 – W
Level 6 – X
Level 7 – T
Level 8 – 7
Level 9 – N
End Screen – L

CO-PILOT SELECT

As with the Level Select codes, take the stem MGKNSHPGER and add the same letters to the front, and there you have it, the co-pilot of your choice.



WWF ROYAL RUMBLE

EASY VICTORY

A cunning ploy here from Stephen Bate of Bately, W. Yorkshire to claim a guaranteed victory every time. Throw your opponent out of the ring, and keep him out of the ring until the referee counts nine. At this point leap back into the ring and he will be left out of the ring when ten is called, forcing an instant disqualification. Smart!

MEGA-CD

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

PASSWORDS

The Tips section wouldn't be complete without an offering from Mat Miller and Mick Herd, and this month they have the passwords to Monkey Island.

Part One – The Three Trials
3076
3176
3177
3377
3777

Part Two – The Sea Voyage
6200
6297
6377
2323

Part Three – Underneath Monkey Island
9430
9433
1436
8742
7310
7377

Last Part – Guybrush Kicks Butt
9898
8989

THUNDERHAWK

INFINITE ARMOUR AND WEAPONS

A tidy tippet from William Fawcett of Newbury provides assistance to Thunderhawkers across the land. During the game, hit PAUSE and enter UP, RIGHT, LEFT, and DOWN. From now on you needn't worry about damage or running out of weapons, and boring things like that.



MASTER SYSTEM

SPEEDBALL II

DIVISION ONE PLAYER AND MANAGER CODES

For all of those out there who can't quite make it into division one, Phillip Priest from Birmingham offers a helping hand. Following the Manager code, are the keys to various playoffs.

MANAGER'S SCREEN
nzil GsM9 UwtE y5gl
4Va2 6Ge1 YWAA 0dec

PLAYER'S SCREEN
ulul D5QO UhtE y5gd
JPes Vsu0 9W8c 0fe2

4X4I GrQO UhtE y5gJ
ivdn 7Vim 9W8c 0Xq7

7Tn1 8rPu gRtE y5gl
uz8a 7S80 9W8c 0g0A

3LOI GrTe chtE g5gl
xTB4 ZC80 9W8c 0YC5
pb8I GrPu chtE y5gl
xPel jtu0 9W8c 0au2

unil GrTe chtE y4BK
wcon UBe0 9W8c 0Xy3

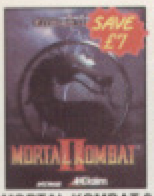
dMKJ 97PO chtE y5gJ
kXYa jE-G 9W8c 0ha4

Px4n 95QO UhtE y2hk
wcts 7Fe0 9w8c 0aW2

MORTAL KOMBAT

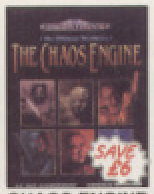
DOUBLE FLAWLESS AGAINST GORO

Olly Cooper from Devon was recently playing MK and discovered this superb tactic when fighting Goro. When the fight starts, duck, time an uppercut, and duck again. Goro might be a little mad, but stand your ground and keep performing somersault kicks into the corner. Easy!

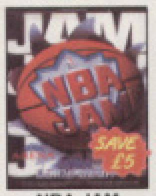


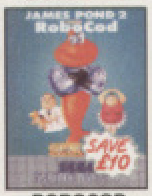


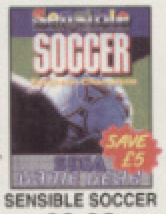


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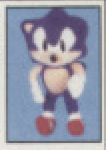

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BIG GLOBAL DOMINATION

Prepare to be bowled over by Ballz. Last month we scored the 3D spherical rumble fest at a Megagame-inducing 91%, and hinted at the vast array of stunts each character is capable of. In this exclusive guide, prepared in association with Accolade, Gus present some of the most spectacular attacks, and shows the right context in which to employ them:

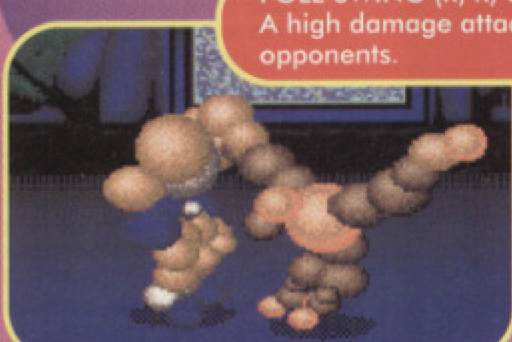
YOKO

GAMERA SPIN ATTACK (Twd, U, U)
A close-range leap and strike attack.



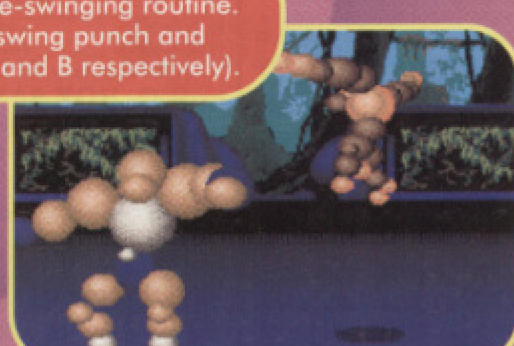
TAUNT (D, Twd, B)
Follow this with a forward roll (Twd, Twd, Twd).

POLE SWING (R, R, U / L, L, U)
A high damage attack: use on moving opponents.



MORPH INTO YOKO (U, R, A+C)

SWING (C, U, U)
This starts Yoko's tree-swinging routine. Use it to launch the swing punch and swing kick moves (A and B respectively).



TURBO

CHARGING FLIP KICK (Twd, Twd, Twd)
A fast frontal attack that works most times.



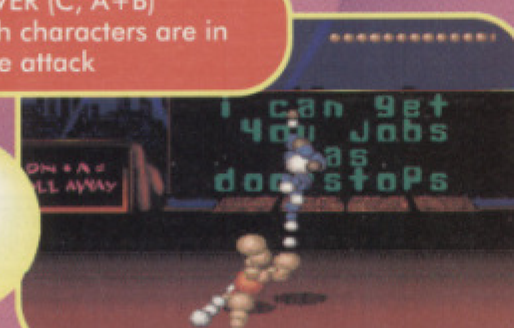
TAUNT (Aw, Twd, U+A)
Follow this with a Super Blow (Twd, Twd, A)

HOVER (C, B+C)
Gives Turbo air superiority. Hold the buttons to maintain a slow descent.



MORPH INTO TURBO (R, R, A+C)

SPINNING PILE DRIVER (C, A+B)
Employed when both characters are in mid-air, a high value attack



TAUNTS, BEGS AND FINISHING MOVES

We've included all the taunting and finishing moves, since they play a vital part in the game. Taunting significantly increases the power of your next attack, BUT ONLY IF YOUR OPPONENT doesn't hit you first. If he does, you sustain an extra hard blow as penalty. You'll find taunts useful for the non-player characters which are extremely hard to throw, and resilient to minor attacks. The best time to taunt is from a large distance, or when you've just stunned an opponent. The finishing moves only work when your opponent is fatigued (their energy bar at three balls or lower). Just press Up twice from a close distance. Begging, again, is only profitable when there's a wide distance between the fighters. Energy will be recovered quite rapidly, but it takes a while for the character to get down on his/her knees.

TAUNT



BEG



FINISH

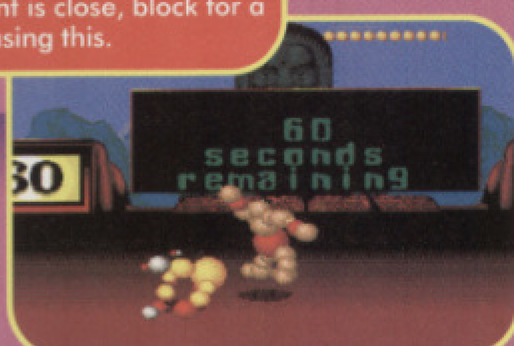


KEY

Twd:	Toward
Aw:	Away
U:	Up
D:	Down
L:	Left
R:	Right
A, B, C:	Joypad buttons

TSUNAMI

KARATE CHOP (U, Twd, A)
When your opponent is close, block for a second before releasing this.



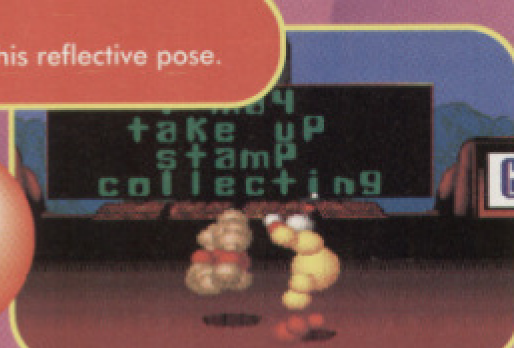
TAUNT (Aw, Twd, U+A)
Follow with a flying somersault kick (Aw, Aw, C).

SUMO SPLASH (C, A+B)
Tsunami's best airborne attack. High damage)



MORPH INTO TSUNAMI (L, R, A+C)

MEDITATE (U, U, C)
Take time out with this reflective pose.



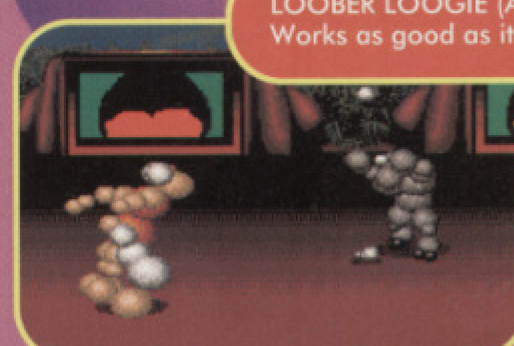
KRONK

FLYING DOWN SPEAR (C, D, D)
A good way to penetrate a defensive character, by coming from the air).



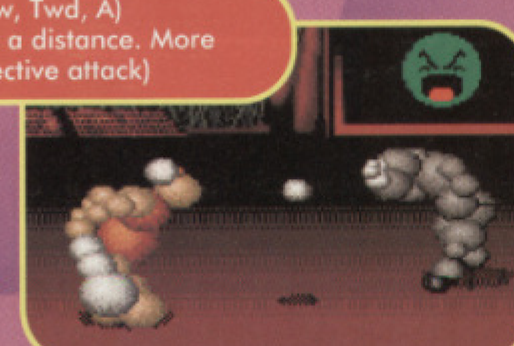
TAUNT (Aw, D, A)
Combine this with a Fencing Lunge (Twd, Twd, A)

LOOBER LOOGIE (Aw, U, A)
Works as good as it sounds!



MORPH INTO KRONK (L, L, A+C)

FLYING PHLEGM (Aw, Twd, A)
Throw spitballs from a distance. More annoyance than effective attack)



DIVINE

SPIN (Aw, U, Twd)
A killer pirouette move, best used on the slower opposition (Crusher, Bruiser)



TAUNT (Aw, Twd, U+A)
Deadly when combined with the lunge kick (U, U, B)

HEAD SCISSORS (Twd, Twd, Twd)
A brilliant medium damage attack against opponents with weak throw defence)



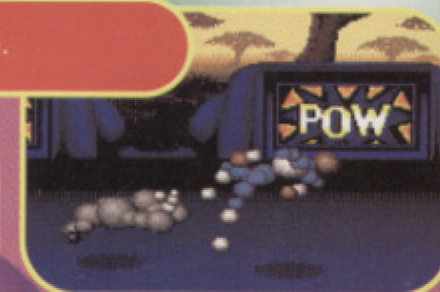
MORPH INTO DIVINE (U, L, A+C)

OPERA MOVE (D, D, U)
Stuns the opponent with Divine's vocal power.



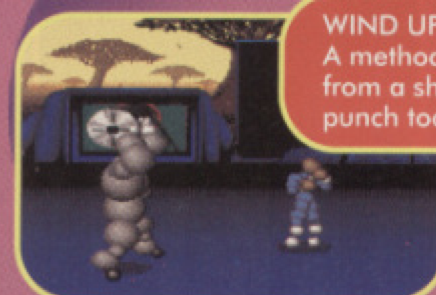
CRUSHER

GROUND SLAM (U, D, A).



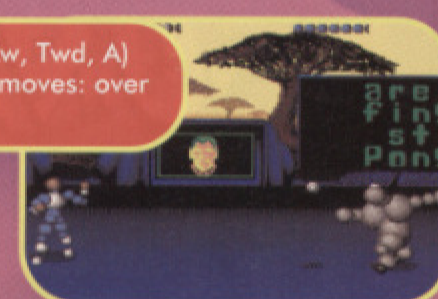
TAUNT (Aw, Twd, U+A)
Follow this with a devastating Rumble Charge (U, D, U)

WIND UP KICK (Aw, Aw, B)
A method of powering up your attack from a short distance away. Works with punch too (A instead of B).



MORPH INTO CRUSHER (D, R, A+C)

HORN THROW (Aw, U, A / Aw, Twd, A)
Two separate horn throwing moves: over and under hand.



BRUISER

CANNONBALL (C, D, D)
Using a ground impact to send a tremor across the arena.



TAUNT (A+B+C)
Pair this up with a cartwheel (L, L, B) or Buckle Toss (Aw, Twd, A)

CYCLONE (R, D, L, U, A)
Luvverly move, and virtually impossible to evade. You can move as you spin.



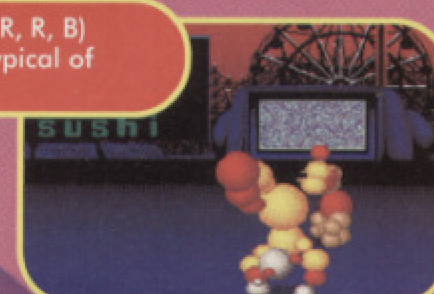
MORPH INTO BRUISER (D, L, A+C)

JUMPING JACKS (U, D, U, D)
A little fun — some quick callisthenics.



BOOMER

HANDSTAND KICK (L, L, B / R, R, B)
Left and right respectively. Typical of Boomer's fast attacks.



TAUNT (Aw, Twd, U+A)
Complement this with a Telescopic Arms attack (D, A+B) or Power Kick (Twd, Twd, B)

SELF DESTRUCT (R, D, L, U, A)
This move is tricky to time. You need space to perform it, but it works best when opponents are approaching.



MORPH INTO TURBO (R, R, A+C)

HEAD BOWLING (Aw, Twd, B)
A good long distance attack, Boomer uses his bonce as a weapon.




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MORTAL KOMBAT II

By now, countless Game Gear owners will be no doubt be battling their way to Shao Kahn in Acclaim's stunning handheld conversion. As with last month's megadrive hints, we've abbrieviated the following commands to save on space so we can unveil every move within the game. The codes are as follows:

- **F - FORWARD**
- **B - BACKWARDS**
- **U - UP**
- **D - DOWN**
- **1 - BUTTON 1**
- **2 - BUTTON 2**
- **BLK - BLOCK**

With that in mind, let's get on with the moves — and they go something like this...

SCORPION



SPECIAL MOVES

SPEAR: B, B + 2
TELEPORT PUNCH: D, B + 2
AIR THROW: BLK (MID AIR)
SCISSOR KICK: 1/2 CIRCLE AWAY, 1

SPIKES

F, B, F + 1

FATALITIES

FIRE BREATH: HOLD BLK. U, U + 1







LIU KANG



SPECIAL MOVES

STAND/JUMP FIREBALL: F, F, 1
DUCKING FIREBALL: F, F, 1, D
FLYING KICK: F, F, 2
BICYCLE KICK: HOLD 2. RELEASE

SPIKES

F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

DRAGON: D, F, B, B, 2





SUB ZERO



SPECIAL MOVES

FREEZE: D, F, 1
GROUND FREEZE: D, B, 1
SLIDE: BKW, BKW. 1+2

SPIKES

F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

FROZEN UPPERCUT: F, F, D, 2. FOLLOWED BY F, D, F, 1





MILEENA



SPECIAL MOVES

TELEPORT KICK: F, F, 2
ROLL ATTACK: B, B, D, 1
SAI TOSS: HOLD 1. RELEASE

SPIKES

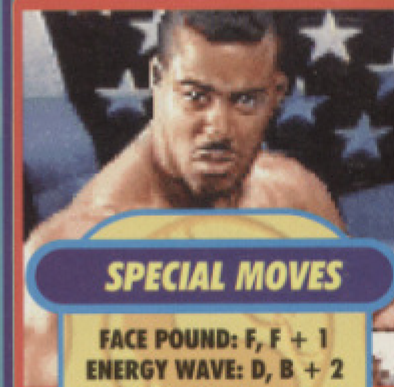
F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

EATEN ALIVE



JAX



SPECIAL MOVES

FACE POUND: F, F + 1
ENERGY WAVE: D, B + 2
GROUND QUAKE: HOLD 2 FOR THREE SECONDS
BACK BREAKER: BLK (MID-AIR)

SPIKES

F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

ULTRA SLAM: F, F, 1, 1, 1, 1... UNTIL THEY EXPLODE



SHANG TSUNG



SPECIAL MOVES

SKULL BOLT: B, B, 1
MORPH TO KUNG LAO: 2+B
MORPH TO SUB-ZERO: 2+F
MORPH TO KITANA:2+D
MORPH TO REPTILE:2+U+L
MORPH TO MILEENA:2+U
MORPH TO SCORPION:2+D+L
MORPH TO JAX:2+D+R

SPIKES

F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

SOUL STEAL: HOLD BLK. U, D, U, 1



KITANA



SPECIAL MOVES

FAN TOSS: F, F, 1+2
FAN SWIPE: B + 1
FAN LIFT: B, B, B, 1
SQUARE WAVE PUNCH: F, B, 1

SPIKES

F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

EATEN ALIVE: HOLD BLK. F, F, F, 2



REPTILE



SPECIAL MOVES

ACID SPIT: F, F, 1
FORCEBALL: B, B, 1
INVISIBLE: HOLD BLK. U, U, D, 1
SLIDE: B, B, 1+2

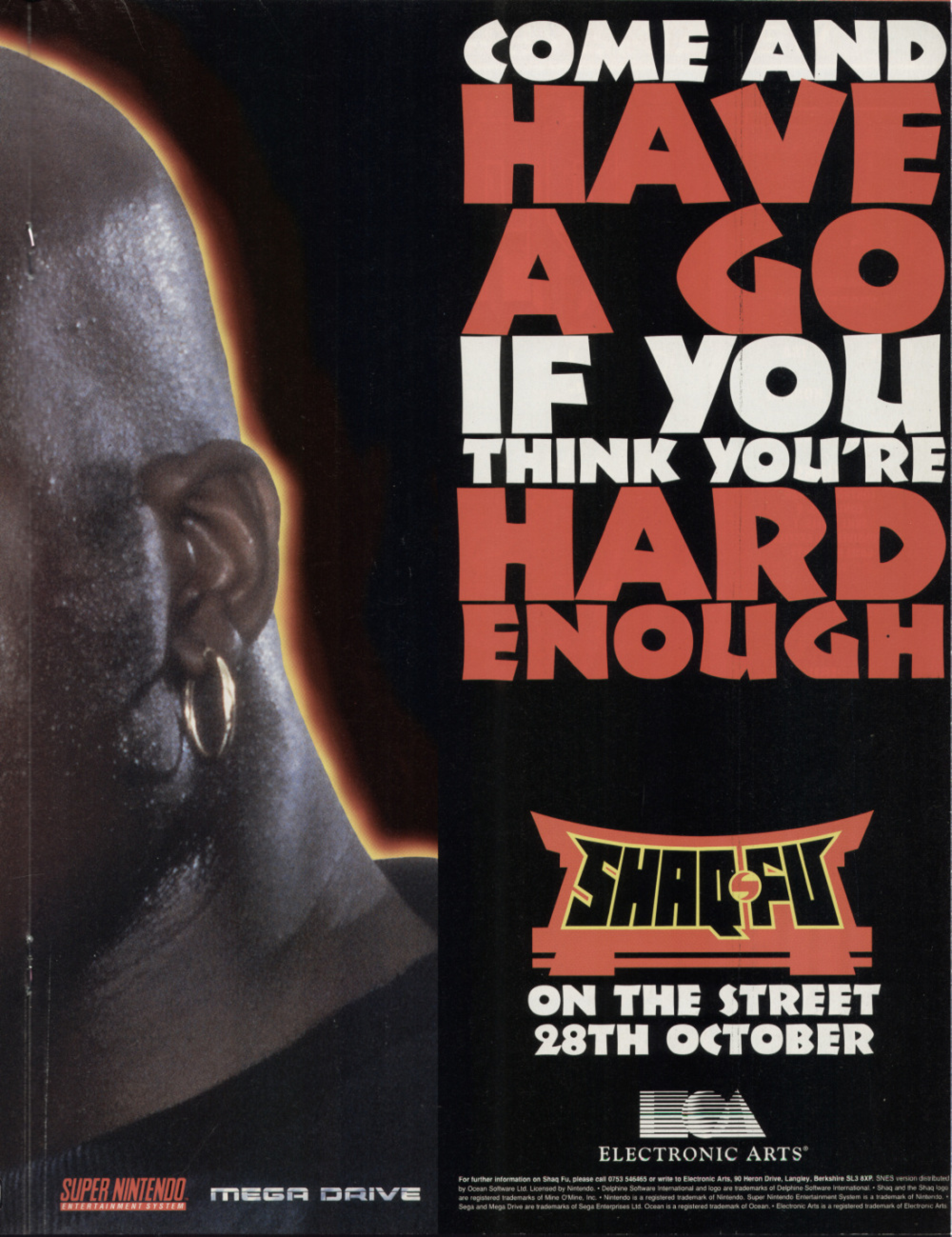
SPIKES

F, B, F, 1

FATALITIES

TONGUE LASH: B, B, D, 1 (FROM 1/2 SCREEN AWAY)





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MEGA DRIVE



1-2 PLAYERS

18 MEG

GAME TYPE
SHOOT 'EM UP

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BY	KONAMI
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SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE
318;850

ORIGIN

After making a hugely successful series on Nintendo formats, Probotector hits the Megadrive.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM

Defend the Earth from Bahamut and his evil cybernetic allies by choosing one of four characters and shooting anything that moves!









▲ ''m big, I'm bad and I'm mean. And I'll use this car to prove it.'

ECTOR

The story so far... Following the departure of the Red Falcon and his evil alien forces, a period of peace and rebuilding began on Earth. From the ruins of the war-torn cities on every continent, the survivors of the alien invasion climbed from their shelters. After years of conflict, people finally had a vision of hope for the future. Work began on resurrecting the last remaining city from the ashes, and rebuilding civilisation to its former prosperity and glory. Under the guidance of the remaining government officials work was under way to guarantee a future for humanity.

That is until the plans went wrong. Horribly wrong. The Commanding Officer of the operation against the alien invasion, Colonel Bahamut, seemed to go insane under all the pressure, and defected to side with the Fourth World Invaders, becoming their Chief Officer. With the help of other criminally minded psychos, he is planning the destruction of the city by corrupting the Mother Computer, and turning the surviving combat and law enforcement droids against the innocent population.

In a last ditch effort, a rag-tag team of Probotectors have been brought together for a search and destroy mission. The four team members must fight it through level upon level of robotic onslaught to rescue the last remaining hope for mankind. Are you up to it?

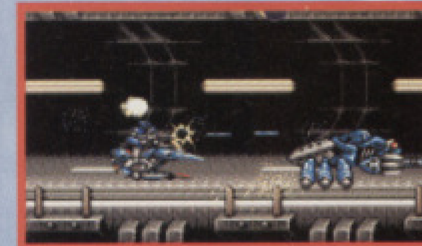


DROPSHIPS

To build up an enemy-destroying arsenal it is essential to keep your eyes peeled for the dropships. As they fly overhead all that is needed is a short gun blast to bring them crashing to the ground for you to collect.







3-DIE-MENTIONAL

To vary the gameplay and appearance, the programmers have added the third dimension to several levels. These include the flying level, in which the Probotectors confront airborne droids and the Wonder Bird, a plane reminiscent of a World War II bomber; and the road chase, a Mode 7-esque high-speed dash to avoid the alien commander.







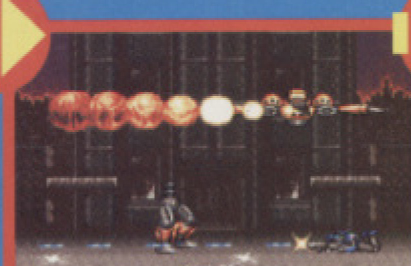


▲ *Bad omens in the VirtuAl Zone from the astrological signs.*



▲ *Beep! Beep! Coming through!*





▲ *'So you think you can defeat me? What if I give you some head!'*





▲ *Curses! — What are you? — Why don't you come over here and find out?*

COMMENT

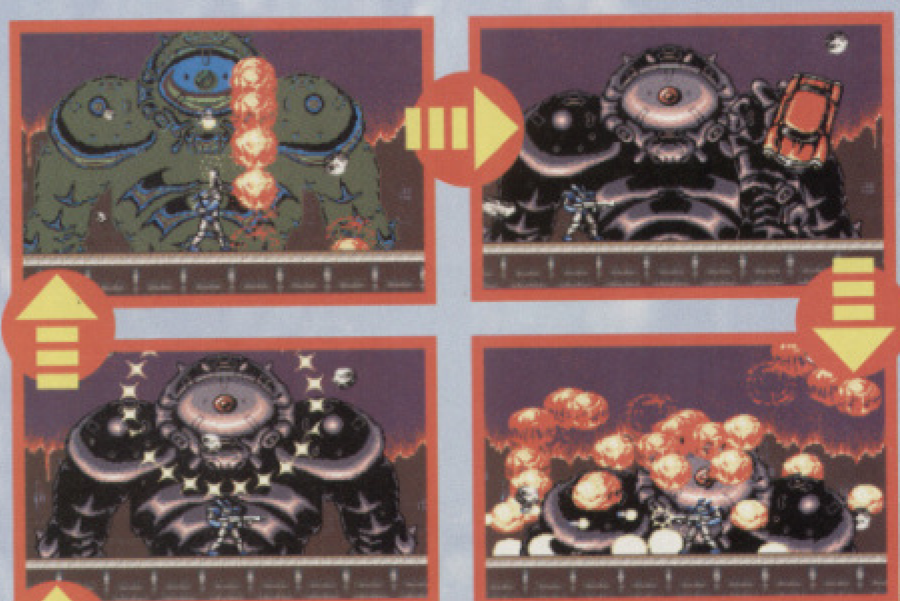


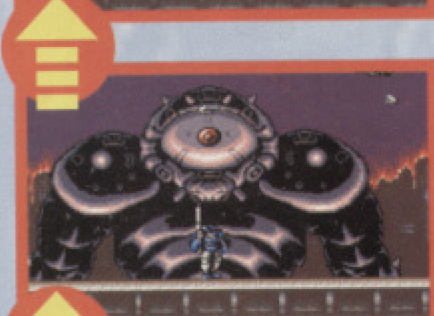
STEVE

I'm a massive fan of Konami's Super NES Contra game, but always found it a little too easy. With this Megadrive version, though, Konami's developers have listened to such criticisms and have created a game which is every bit as playable as the original, but infinitely more rewarding. Whilst the Super NES game relies on Mode 7 trickery, this Sega version concentrates on the fast-paced shoot 'em up action, and adding innovation to the game's many levels. There are countless bosses to be fought, a huge array of weapony, and the 3D section where you run away from a pursuing giant with extending arms in nothing short of stunning. Konami are on a real roll at the moment, but for me Probotector is as good as it gets. With it,they have reinvented the shoot 'em up genre, and if you're a fan of mindless destruction this is the best fix you are ever likely to get. Enrol today!

HEAVY METAL

Here are the crew to entertain you. Everyone's a winner, but each has individual talents and fighting styles, not to mention specific weapons. Let's delve some more into the hearts of steel.







▲*Skyscraper high jinks as you battle the rampaging robot in the city.*

ROUTE OF ALL EVIL

The game has a massive six endings (including one hidden ending) dependant on the route you choose to take during the game. Every route covers the six environments (City Battle, High Speed Fight, Jungle, Air Combat, Sea Struggle, and Alien Space), uncovering new locations and enterprising alterations in gameplay.

CX-1

CRASH



SPREAD



HOMING



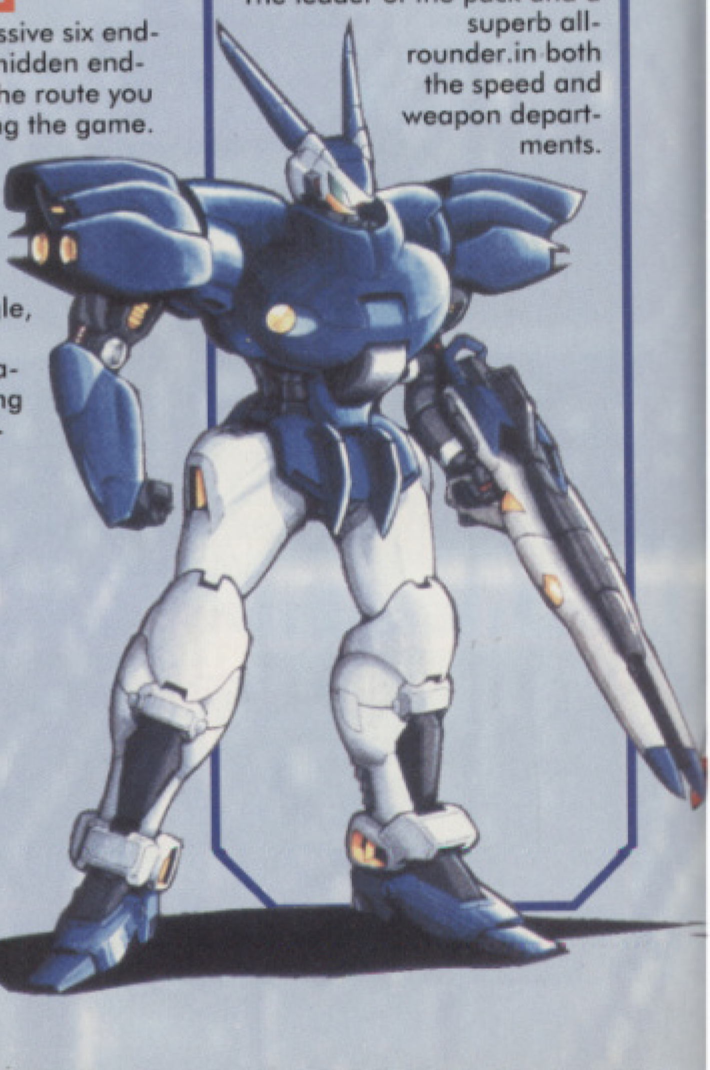
SMART BOMB



VULCAN LASER



The leader of the pack and a superb allrounder.in both the speed and weapon departments.



DOUBLE TROUBLE

You know what they say: two guns are better than one! Enlist the help of a mate and it's two player team work action ahoy! But as the fun gets furious, watch out for enemy fire as every time you restart past your limit of lives, one life is deducted from the other player.



CX-2

GENOCIDE VULCAN



SHOWER CRASH



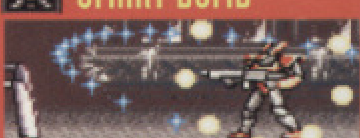
BREAK LASER



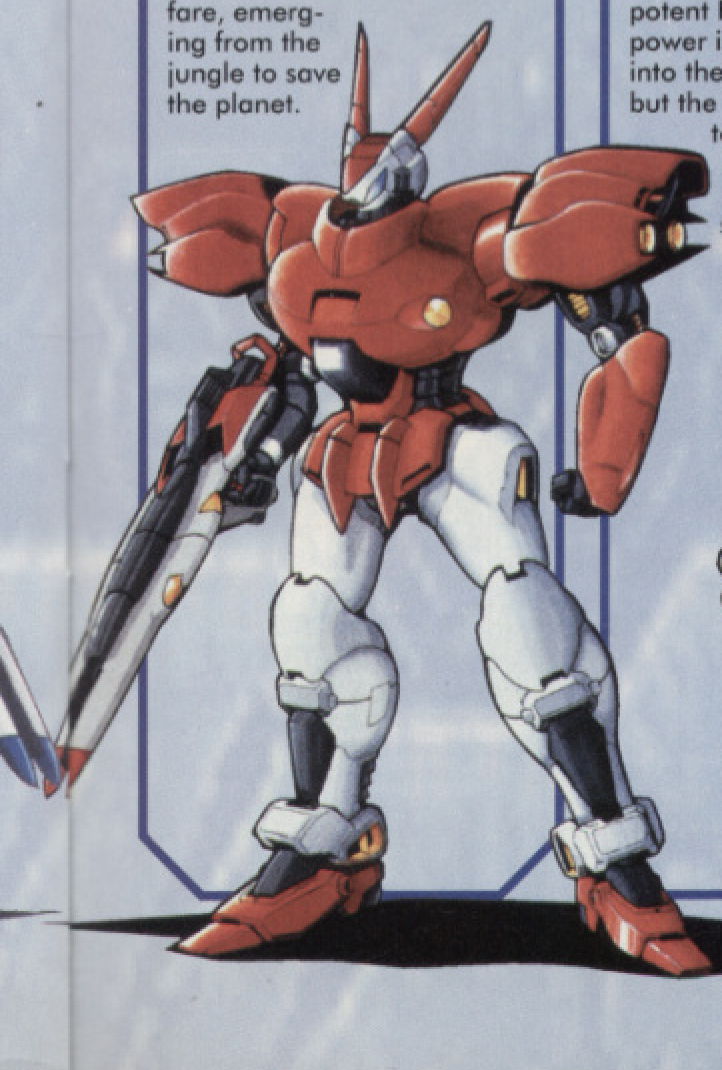
AX LASER



SMART BOMB



A master of guerrilla warfare, emerging from the jungle to save the planet.



CX-3

BEAST SHOOTER



FLAME



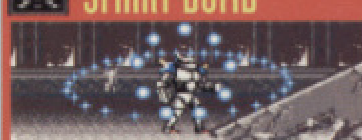
POWERPUNCH



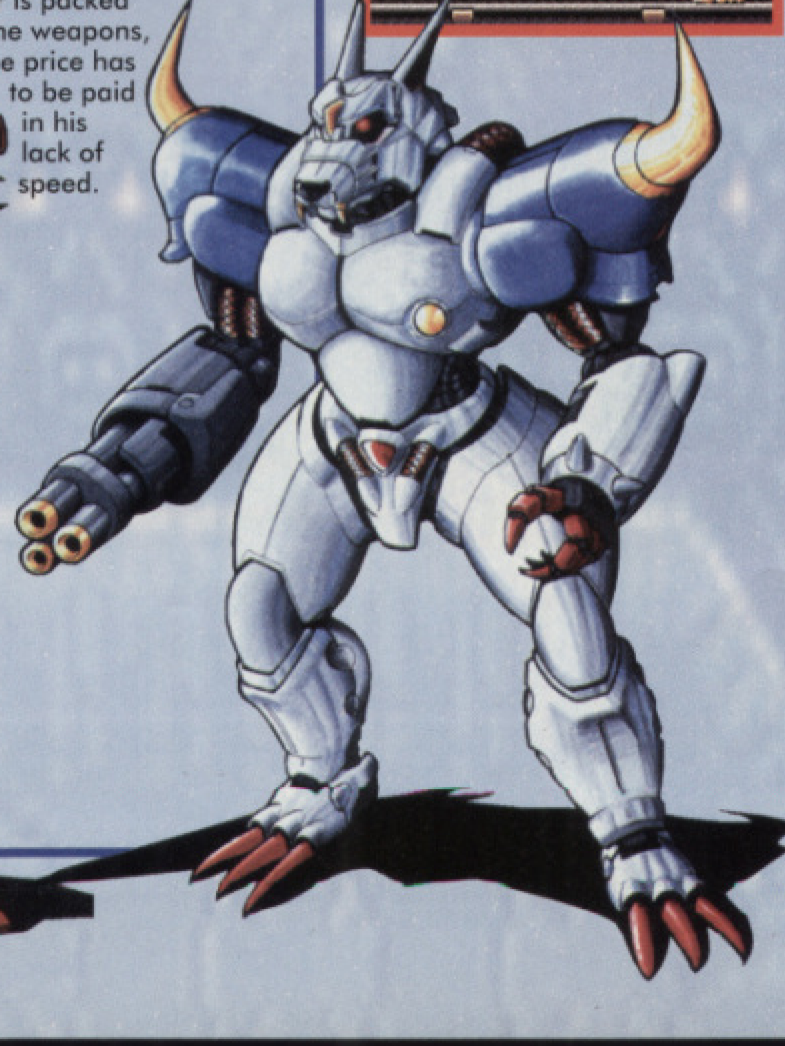
PSYCHOBLASTER



SMART BOMB

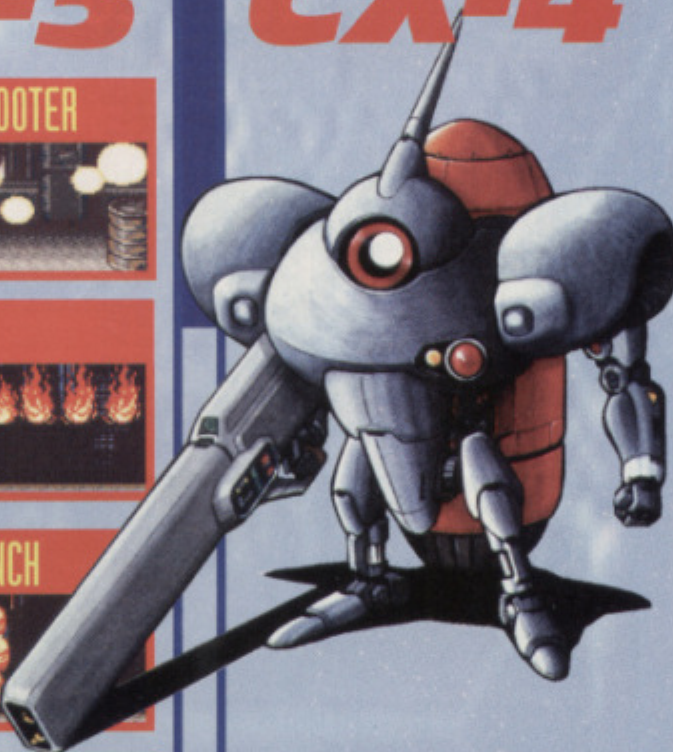


The battle leader and most potent Probotector. Pure power is packed into the weapons, but the price has to be paid in his lack of speed.



CX-4

An infiltration droid of the highest calibre. Vertically challenged, but armed to the teeth with some bizarre weapons.



VICTORY LASER



GEMINI SCATTER



ELECTROMAGNETIC YO-YO

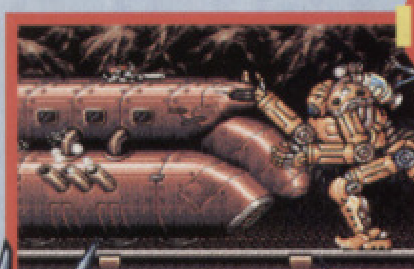


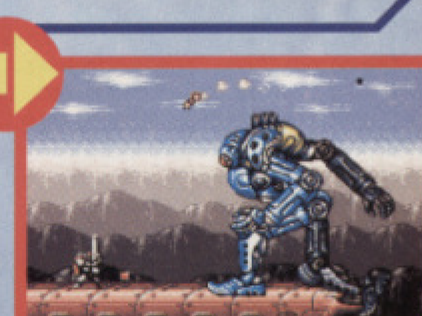
SHIELD CHASER



SMART BOMB









▲ *These boys have more than leaves on the track to contend with.*



▲ *Ba, bup, ba, born to be wilheeild!*

COMMENT

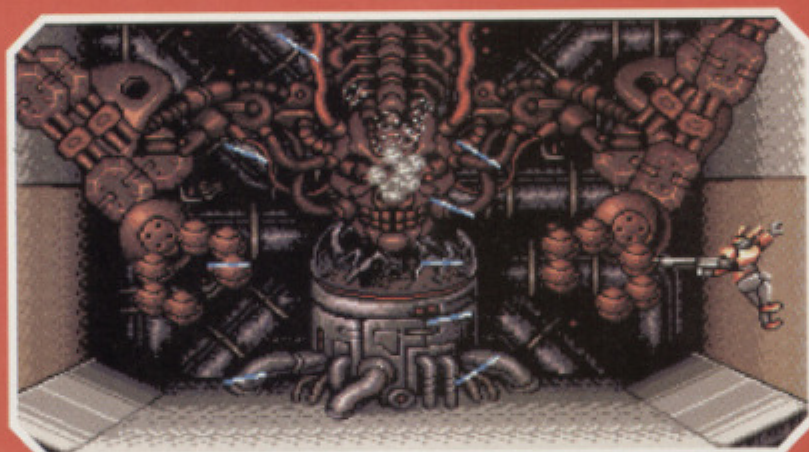


PAUL

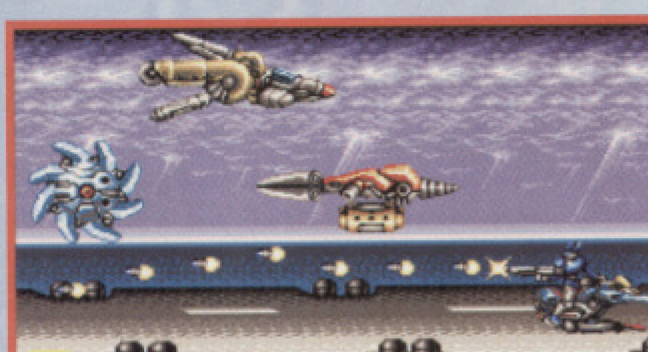
In a world where games have an ever decreasing shelf-life, it is a joy to see a timeless classic hit the Megadrive. This is gaming in its purest form, not a scrap of gristle as every spare inch is packed with action and challenge. The difficulty setting may frustrate a great number of people, but all good things come to those who wait. This is a case of practise makes perfect! The choice of route system is a superb idea, guaranteeing hour upon hour of gaming heaven as you play through new and uncharted levels. So much time and effort has been ploughed into making this a superior sequel, not by churning out flash graphics at the expense of the gameplay, but by using thought and imagination. This is all so apparent when you witness the gigantuan bosses, and their unfeasible antics. Probotector is an absolute must for all Megadrive owners, and shows the shoot 'em up reaching its ultimate form!

BOSSES

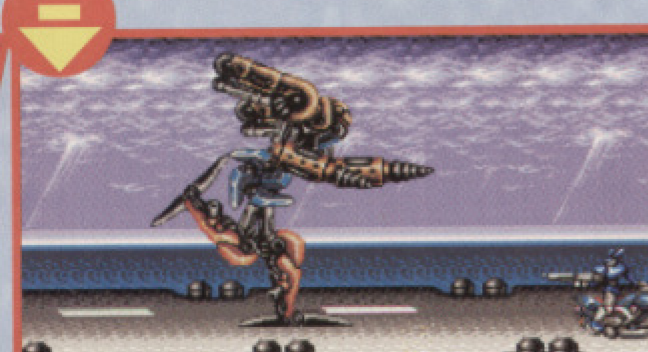
You think the enemy ground droids are tough? You ain't seen nothing yet, as Probotector's bosses are something else! They run, they jump, they throw things at you, and these end-of-level guardians are some of the biggest sprites to grace the Megadrive. But as they say, size isn't everything, and, as with any boss worth his salt, they have crucial weak spots. Once the weak spot is identified, the Probotector must study and dodge the attack pattern while putting in those vital shots. But never turn your back on a boss, even when the abomination is chucking out smoke and flames, as they often morph into an even deadlier form for the second round of attack.



► Watch and weep as these droids transform!







▲ It's the Lyndford Christie of boss characters.

▼ It's the waste dump in the sky for poor old CX-2.



▼ Remember kids, never play with homing missiles and petrol trucks.





▲Ha! Ha! Ha! You cannot defeat me foolish Probotector!

GRAPHICS — 92

▲An absolute visual fest with the mind-blowing explosions, bosses, and 3D sections!
▼The character sprites are a tad small.

SOUND — 90

▲Crank up the volume to appreciate the rumblerama of countless high-octane blasts mixed with perfectly paced tunes. Ace!

PLAYABILITY — 95

▲Hair-pullingly, joypad-smashingly, one-more-goingly superb! It's flipping tough, but oh-so rewarding!

LASTABILITY — 92

▲Six endings, a difficulty setting permanently on rock hard, and secret sections. This will last an aeon, and then you'll play it again!

VFM — 91

▲A game that will be played time after time. Well worth the price tag.

OVERALL — 94

▲A masterpiece in Megadrive programming. Tough in all the right places, packed with levels, and soaked in imagination and innovation. Brilliant!

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RED Z



1 PLAYERS | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
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PRICE TBA

BY TIME WARNER

RELEASE NOVEMBER

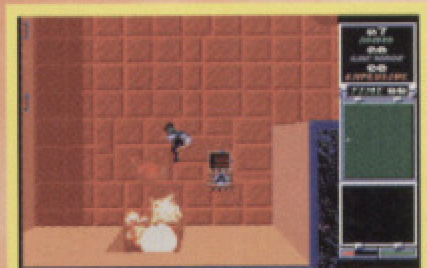
OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: VERY HARD

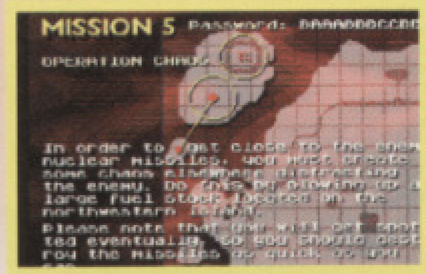
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29,000

ORIGIN
Programmed by Zyrinx, of Subterranean fame, Red Zone has shades of that game's control, and the EA 'Strike' games' action.

GAME BREAKDOWN
ORIGINALITY
REFLEXES
CHALLENGE
ACTION
STRATEGY

GAME AIM
Complete a set of airborne and underground missions in a bid to forestall the designs of a nuclear-powered Mad Dictator.







MEGA GAME

The future is a jackboot, forever stamping in your face. So said Orwell. An uncomfortable prospect. Future imperfect, you might say, but at present a real possibility, if the nefarious plans of one Mad Dictator™ (Rabid Despots Inc.) are realised. Someone has been a tad silly and sold the nutcase a matching set of nuclear missiles. Unless his chilling demands are met, the world's going up like baked Alaska.

Which is where you come in. An all-out assault on his island fortress wouldn't work — he's sitting with his finger literally on the button. But a series of lightning covert helicopter raids might be able to break his command and communication structures and disable the armaments before he has time to react. And then we can all have a future without goose-stepping to school, military brass bands on The Chart Show and the casual torture and murder of innocent millions. Yum.



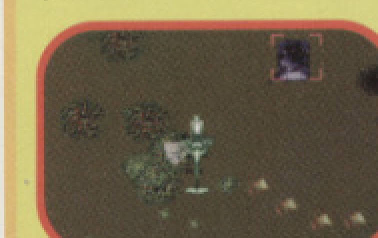


▲ *Russian style greatcoat and matching beret, from Harvey Nichols.*



I GO SPINNING

Like Zyrinx's debut, control and feel are an integral part of the game experience. The game is played from overhead, with the chopper in the centre of the action window. Movement is by rotation and forward thrust. The high level of inertia makes control an acquired skill, and it also takes some time to orientate yourself to the display. A sense of depth is created, by the construction of game features using 'stacked' sprites. Multiple layers of parallax create a novel and convincing perspective.



LOOK AT MY CHOPPER

Ah, the old ones are the best, huh? Maybe when it comes to headlines, but it's always nice to have the latest in heli technology. Red Zone offers the very tops in rotor-powered design. You have four weapons systems, suited to targets ranging from SAM carrying troops to super armoured tanks. Your cannon offers 1100 rounds, and is capable of taking out most targets in a couple of seconds. A generous supply of rockets is useful for fixed emplacements. Hellfires back a computer-guided punch, and Stingers are essential for air-to-air combat.



ZONE







TIP OF THE ICEBERG

Game time spent in the air as opposed to on the ground is about the ratio 3:1. However, the mission sections are not an afterthought, but a developed part of the game. Take your agents into the complexes. Eliminate resistance, locate the computer terminals and comply with any specific mission instructions. Then get the hell out — as the bunkers usually explode!



COMMENT



PAUL

Hoorah for Red Zone! From the word 'go' the presentation is absolutely stunning. FMV from a cart? As Gus says 'How do they do that?'. Yet beneath the glossy intro lies an equally stunning helicopter sim. The combination of air and ground combat missions works perfectly – varying gameplay and capturing interest. The control system of the 'copter is superb, being both teeth-grindingly frustrating and realistic in the way it rotates and requires constant attention. But the in-game graphics really take the biscuit. Zyrinx have excelled themselves in their use of perspective. Although it may not look it from the screenshots, believe you me, once you've witnessed the scrolling and scaling of the pylons above ground and the parallax of the multi-leveled bunkers, you will be amazed. Give this game a (sweetie) cigar!

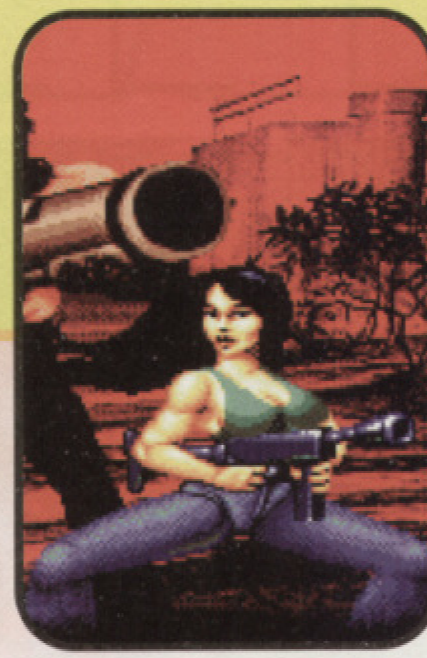
THE NEW AVENGERS

When you come to land, the choice is between your three trusted agents to perform any specific mission task. Shades, Rocco and Mirage have their own weapons and characteristics. Fail with one, and the others may still complete the task.

SHADES
Carries a machine-gun and grenades. Is able to reach snipers behind sandbags.



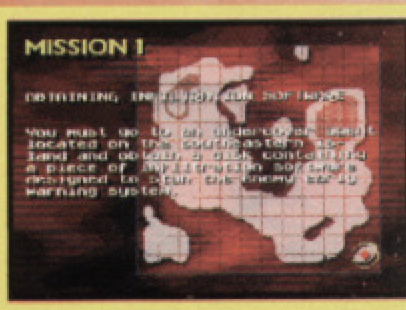
MIRAGE
Fastest, and also equipped with a rifle and throwing knives. Knives are deadly, and if she misses Mirage can collect the



ROCCO
His main weapon is a flamethrower. Quick to kill, but limited to close range. Rocco also carries a handful of powerful long-range rockets.







COMMENT



Zyrinx emphatically prove Subterranea was no fluke with the confident, slick and savagely playable Red Zone. Both games certainly share some common characteristics — tricky control, a steep challenge from the word 'Go!', and the mixing of impossible frustration with real satisfaction when a tough level is cracked. Despite passwords for every level, days are spent trying to inch forward, but always there's a feeling of encouragement that next time you will make it to the bunker, or successfully defuse the missile. The game is inherently logical, and rewards deep thinkers as often as itchy triggers. Technically, it manages to push the Megadrive forward, with a mystifying 3D technique that looks even more sensational in the bunkers as it does in the flight sections. Zyrinx have the knack of making something infinitely polished, yet raw at the same time — and it's made Red Zone one of the hungrier, deadlier and more essential

MAP AND SNAP

The supplementary map is accessed by pausing the game. There's a wealth of information here, from a basic guide to every landing site on the islands, to picture info on the missions. The Zoom function is particularly impressive. You are presented with a faded satscan of the mission zone, and the option to increase resolution, showing greater and greater detail.



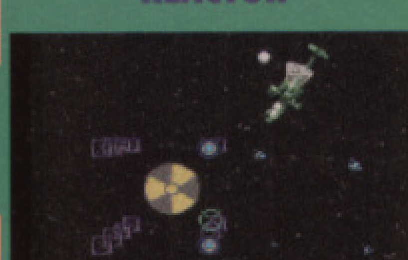
ROOKIE CHORES

Gazetteer to the early objectives:

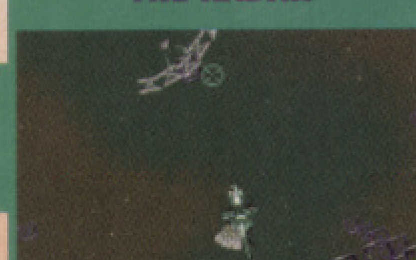
1. LOCATE THE AGENT WITH HIS DISKS



2. DISABLE THE REACTOR

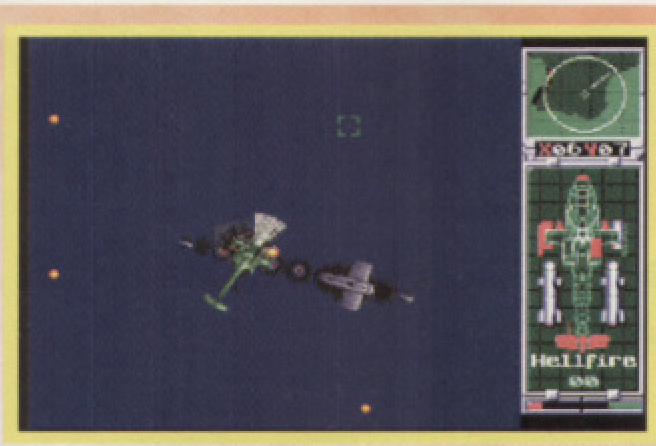


3. DESTROY THE RADAR

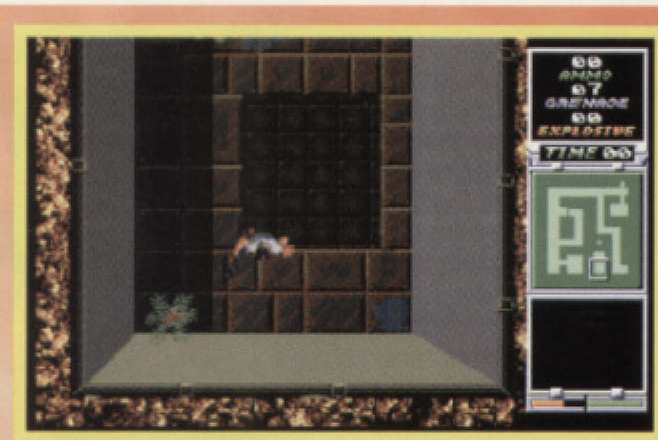


4. LAUNCH AIRFIELD STRIKE





▲ *Dive! Dive! Dive!*

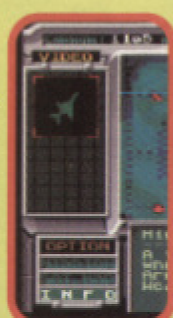




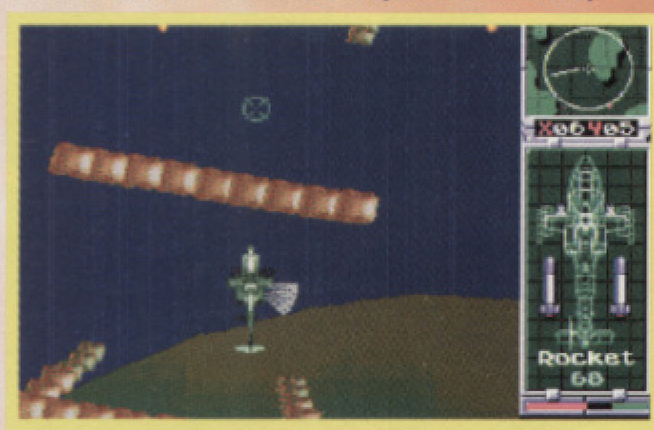


▲ *Isn't that Robert Maxwell's old yacht? Bombs away.*

DASH AND DIAL



Your on-screen instrumentation is an information lifeline as only a small portion of terrain is visible in the scrolling action window at any one time. On the right is a small radar compass, which constantly updates, showing the land outline, major targets and defences, as well as your heading. Below that is the ordinance and damage indicator. It alerts you to structural damage to your craft, and displays selected armament



▲ *It's helicopter kick start. Whoops, ten second penalty!*



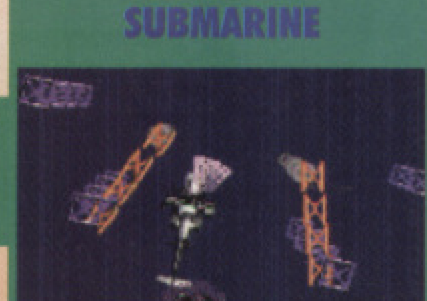


◄ *Due to a security alert at King's Cross...*

5. DISABLE MISSILES



6. LOCATE SUBMARINE



▼ *Attack of the flaming trouser snake*



GRAPHICS

93

▲A 'How did they do that?' graphic presentation — depth, perspective, parallax, smooth rotational scrolling: no complaints.

SOUND

89

▲Moody Depeche Mode synth music accompanies the action, with some lovely explosive effects.

▼A certain amount of recycling from Subterranea, which is a tad

PLAYABILITY

94

▲Takes a few hours to get the feel of the game, and then you realise it's gripped you by the throat. Really well though out missions.

LASTABILITY

91

▲It's possible to play the same mission 30 times, and fail on each attempt — and still WANT to try again. That's lastability.

VFM

90

▲You're paying for a game that's been put together by craftsmen. One day this will be an antique!

OVERALL

92

Could be the best game you bought all year — if you can handle it. You've got to be good. You've got to be very good.

SONIC



1-2 PLAYERS | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE	TBA
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY

1ST DAY SCORE
COMPLETE SANDOPOLIS

ORIGIN
The fourth Megadrive specific adventure of the Hedgehog who needs no introduction. Created by Team Sonic from the Sonic 3 engine.

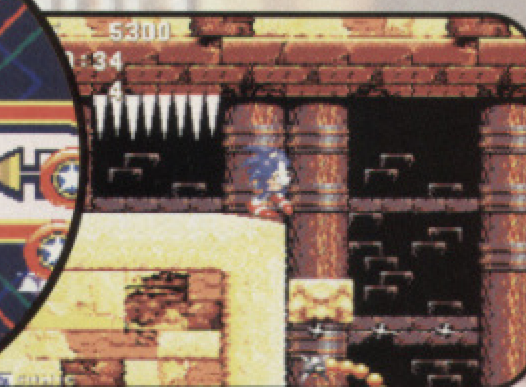
GAME BREAKDOWN
ORIGINALITY | REFLEXES | CHALLENGE | ACTION | STRATEGY

GAME AIM
Defeat Robotnik with either Sonic or Knuckles to retrieve the Chaos Emeralds from six landscapes.

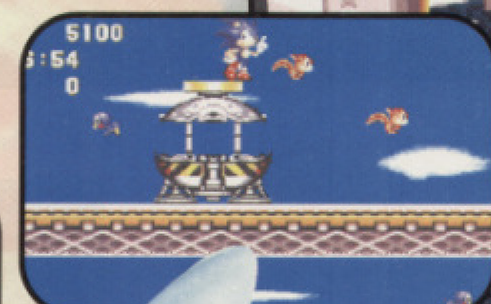
A plot intro is not really required for Sonic and Knuckles, as the plot for any Sonic adventure is as predictable and derivative as an episode of Terry and June. But unlike that (now defunct) pairing, the pink and blue duo are not going to settle down in a nice semi in Pinner, suck up to their boss and grow roses. They'd rather take on the fattest bad man (or baddest fat man) with a moustache in the universe — Dr Eggman Robotnik (who could be played by Anton Rogers from TV's Fresh Fields/ May to December) in a bid to retrieve the infamous Chaos Emeralds, which are misplaced with Mr Bean-like frequency.

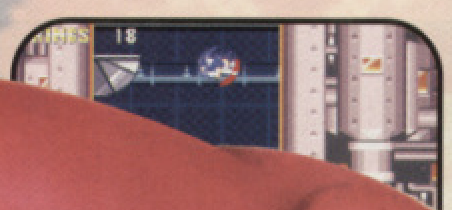
Notice the subtly introduced sitcom theme? As Sonic and Knuckles is a platform game much in that mould. Comedy contraptions, funny sprites, bonus games that look like sets from Rowan and Martin's Laugh In. All that's missing is the canned laughter. See you again next week for yet another fun-packed edition. You have been watching...

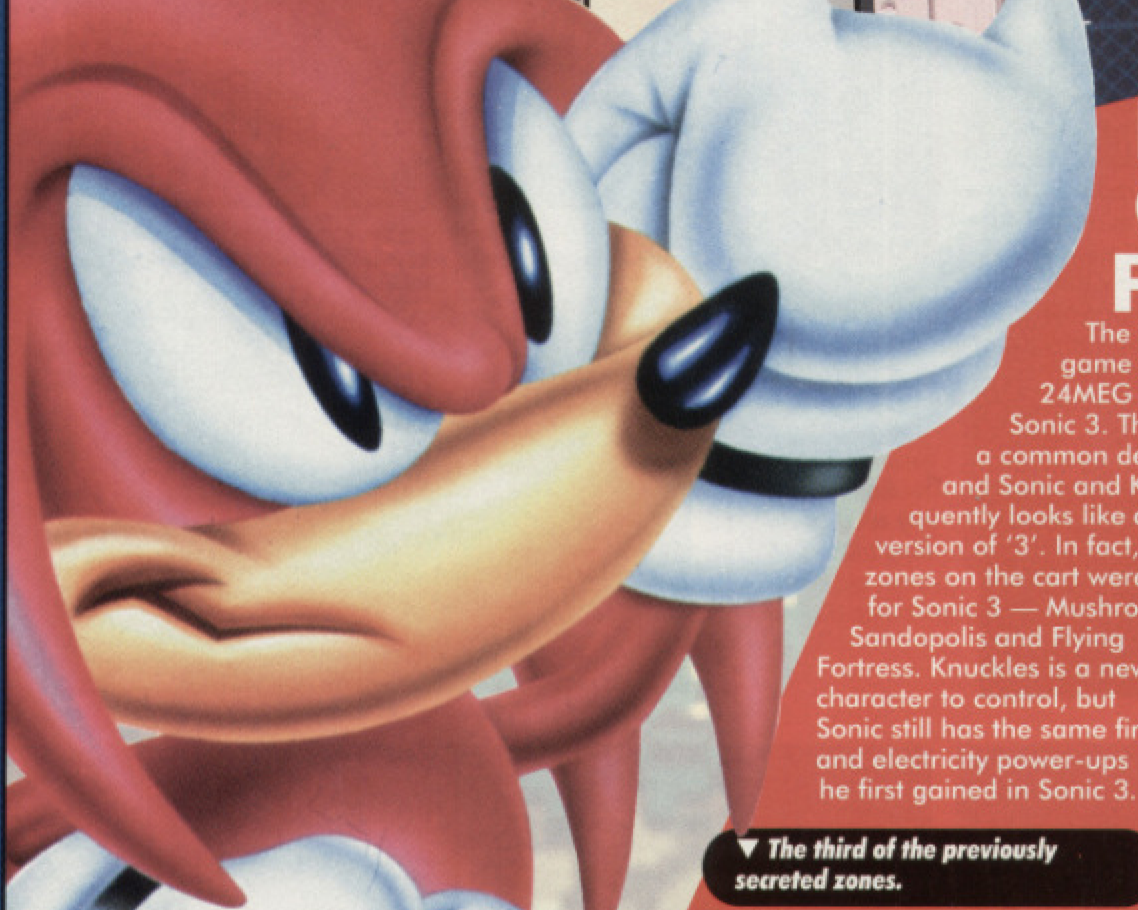












LICK OF PAINT

The mechanics of the game are similar to its 24MEG predecessor, Sonic 3. The games share a common design engine, and Sonic and Knuckles frequently looks like a redecorated version of '3'. In fact, three of the zones on the cart were intended for Sonic 3 — Mushroom Hill, Sandopolis and Flying Fortress. Knuckles is a new character to control, but Sonic still has the same fire and electricity power-ups he first gained in Sonic 3.


SANDOPOIS

▼ *The third of the previously secreted zones.*


FLYING FORTRESS

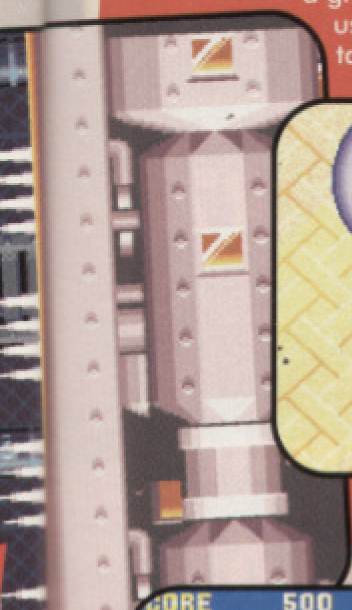

MUSHROOM HILL

& KNUCKLES

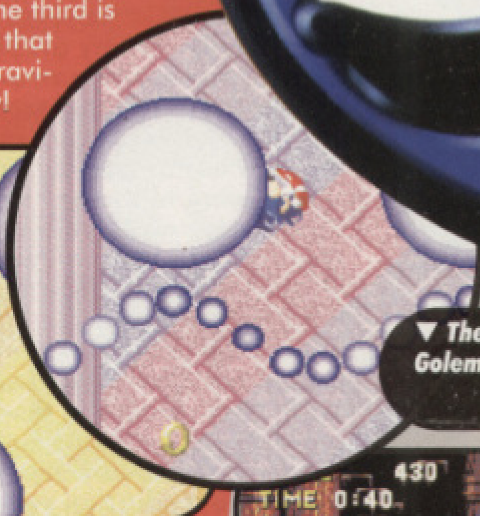


PENNY ARCADE

The number of bonus games in Sonic rises once more. We've counted three this time. The giant ring game is the same as Sonic 3 — a 3D maze of balls, with all the blue spheres to be collected. It must be added that this time the stages are a LOT harder. The second game is a rotating fruit machine level which harks back to the very first Sonic secret level. Tricky one that. The third is a groovy scrolling pin table that uses weird inertial and gravitational effects — groovy!





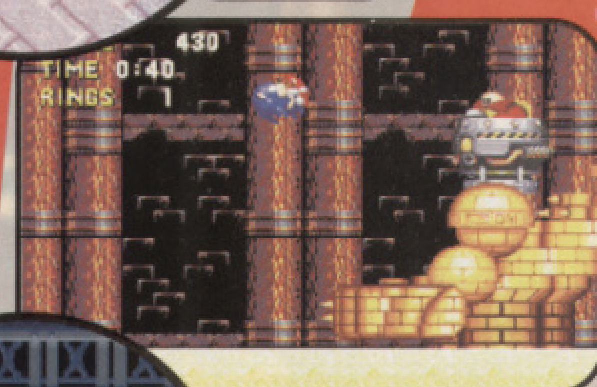


▲ The newest of the three bonus games: gravitastic ring grabbing

▼ The Sandopolis Golem boss.

GREY MATTER

Most of the game is played at great speed, relying on the player's reflexes, and this is Sonic's great gameplay trademark. But Sonic and Knuckles forces you to think, with switches and machines used to reach further areas. Sandopolis is a good example, where large timer switches hold open doors temporarily.

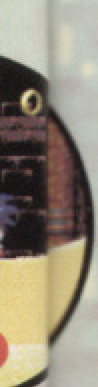












EVANGELISTIC!

We confirm that Sonic and Knuckles allows your other Sonic titles to be born again. As honest brokers, we admit that this part of the game has NOT been finalised for our review, but it's beyond doubt that Sonic will add extra levels to Sonic 3, allow you to play Sonic 2 as Knuckles, and possess other such backwardly-compatible features.



IM-BOSS-TER

The bosses are back — and this time they've brought their friends. Each level has a curious quota of composite sprites launching stylised attacks. Some are overcome by insight rather than gaming skill, e.g the large stone golem that makes a jump too far on Sandopolis.

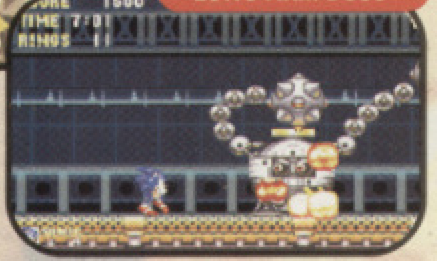


CHIN UP BOSS

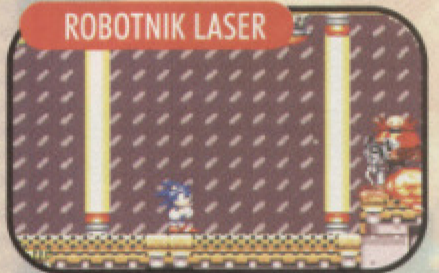




'GOLEM ' BOSS



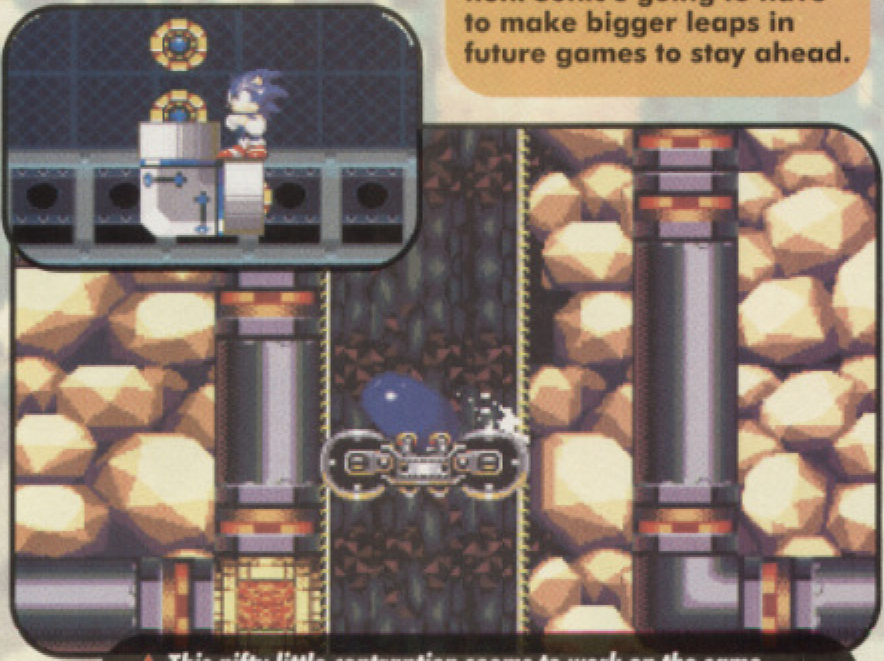
LONG ARM BOSS



ROBOTNIK LASER



SAND BOSS



This nifty little contraption seems to work on the same principle as those little hand rollers that, er, roll 'things'.

COMMENT



STEVE

Gasp! We've found a Sonic game which isn't worthy of a Megagame! Whilst Sonic and Knuckles is still as polished as its many predecessors, the novelty of looping the loop, corkscrew effects and multi-hit bosses is now wearing extremely thin. Granted, new additions have been made to the gameplay with the additions of crane devices, new backdrops and a slight puzzle element, but it just isn't enough. Basically, I think the current Sonic engine has come as far as it can go, and even the most die-hard Sonic fans will come away from this latest version feeling a little cheated. Even the backwards compatibility — whilst a nice idea — is little more than a short-lived novelty. Don't get me wrong, Sonic and Knuckles is every bit as good as Sonic 3, but it is just more of the same and, consequently, is likely to be usurped by Sega's new hero, Dynamite Headdy. S&K may be ideal for the Sonic novice, as it is the most polished of the lot — but are there any Sonic newcomers left?

COMMENT



GUS

Is it possible to have too much of a good thing? I was beginning to think that while playing Sonic and Knuckles. The similarity to the other Sonic games is obvious, and the feeling of Deja vu with Sonic 3 is almost disturbing. To its credit the game features some really creamy graphics, and some cute gameplay ideas — the corkscrew lifts, the light switches, and the new bonus games. But we're living in the age of Probotector and Dynamite Headdy, whose ambitious effects takes the edge off the presentation and makes the gameplay look linear and sometimes stagnant. That aside, I'm dismayed how the game has been recalibrated from the tough preproduction version to be much less challenging. The boss patterns are easy to deconstruct, and areas of the levels are sparse and empty of enemies. This flaws a game that otherwise matches the same production standards of Sonic 3. But even that standard is nine months old, and the format is looking jaded against some exceptional recent competition. Sonic's going to have to make bigger leaps in future games to stay ahead.

GRAPHICS — 93

▲ Strong distinctive branding of the Sonic game, with a more creative use of the colour palette than before. The best looker since Sonic CD.

SOUND — 90

▲ A new suite of dancy, jaunty, pacey tunes that give an upbeat feel while playing.
▼ Some FX have been recycled through more games than the average ecology pad.

PLAYABILITY — 87

▲ As immediate, as instinctive and ALMOST as fast as previous Sonic efforts. Lots of clever things to find and see as you go.
▼ Linear, and too easy.

LASTABILITY — 81

▲ Despite the emerald quest, this is the softest title since the original Sonic. Not for hardened games players.

VFM — 86

▲ The plug-through facility injects some life into games already bought.
▼ Too much like Sonic 3 to be considered as a wholly 'new' game.

OVERALL — 85

Sonic has still got it, but for the first time he looks like he might not be keeping up. Against a rising tide of quality, Sonic and Knuckles is frankly treading water.

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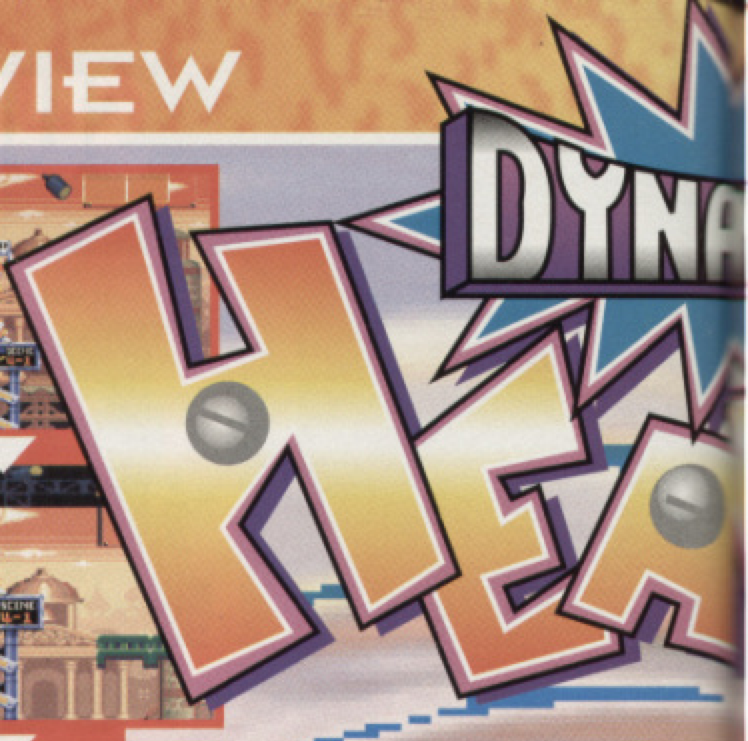
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1 PLAYER

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE £49.99

BY SEGA

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: VARIES
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
140,000

ORIGIN
Dynamite Headdy is a Treasure production and borrows ideas from an old Megadrive game called Decap Attack.

GAME BREAKDOWN

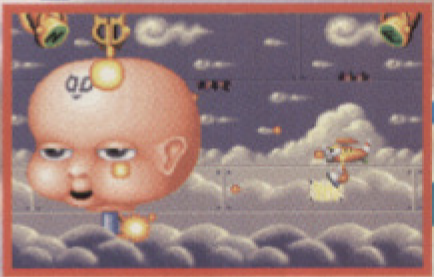


GAME AIM
Defeat all the keymasters in the puppet kingdom to free the kidnapped Headdys.

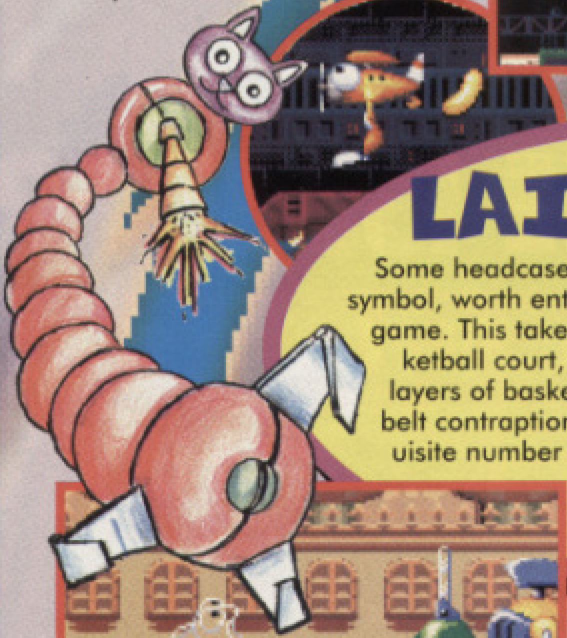
When Sandie Shaw won the Eurovision Song Contest with 'Puppet on a string', most people thought it was an innocent, lovely little song. In fact, it was devious propaganda on behalf of the wicked imperial puppet kingdom. The image they would like to present is one of those playful lonely goatherds of 'The Sound of Music', when really they are all malevolent marionettes.

Dynamite Headdy knows this only too well. His peaceful grasshopper-like race is being trapped and consumed by monstrous machines and cold-hearted toys. Their only hope of release lies in the destruction of the fearsome keymasters. Surely a suicide mission, were it not for the collection of shoulder-mounted accoutrement Headdy has brought along for the trip...





▲ *A sequence showing the collapsing scenery in Terminate Her Too.*



LAID UP

Some headcases carry a Bonus symbol, worth entry to the bonus game. This takes place on a basketball court, rigged with two layers of baskets on a conveyor belt contraption. Drop a prerequisite number of balls into the right baskets for extra points and a clue.





MEGA GAME





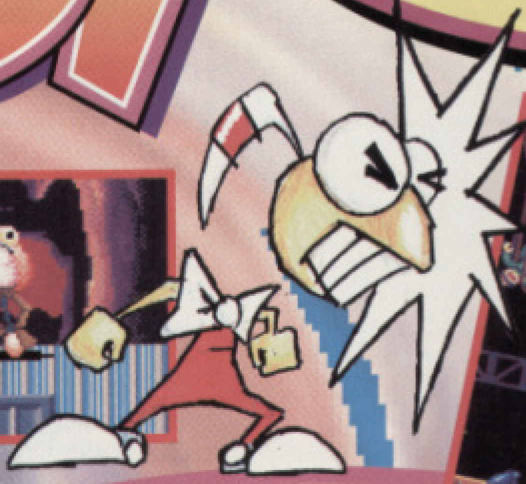




BEAU JEST



The character of Beau is mysterious. He (she?) turns up at Keymaster time, riding an arrow, to alert you to the weak areas of the keymasters. Spend some time sharpening your reflexes in the Beau practice area.





▼ *A rather odd, and not entirely friendly thing.*



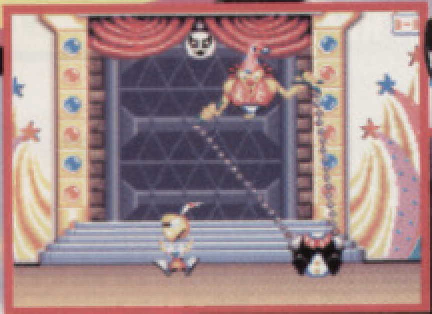
▲ *Toad this, fatboy*

THE HEADDY SCENT OF VICTORY

The puppet world is peppered with big cheese bosses all out to stop Headdy progressing. All of them, from the Guest puppet to the Puppet Tower keymaster exhibit predictable forms of behaviour you must learn and exploit...









▲ *Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to cut off your head.*

COMMENT

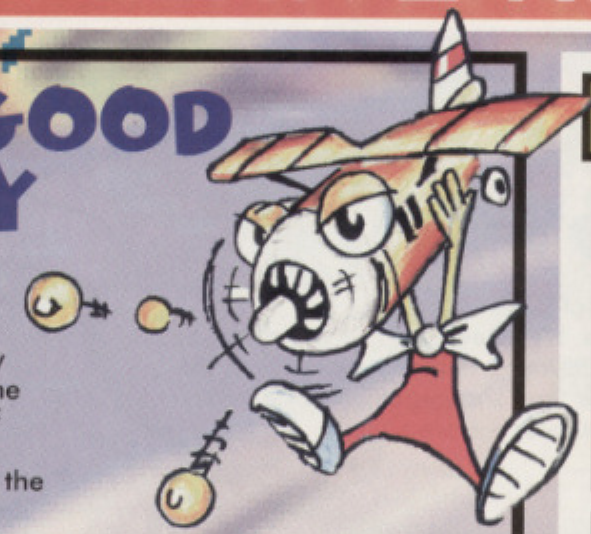


GUS

Treasure are, in a way, to video games what INXS are to music. You know they are skilled enough to produce great work, though they don't always do so. Dynamite Headdy confirms their technical excellence, packed as it is with ingenious and innovative special effects. At first, I thought the whole enterprise was superficial, as the early levels gameplay just didn't match up to the promise of the sound and graphics. But as you progress, some classic sections appear, and Headdy reveals itself as a truly great game. No section is too long, so you don't get bored, although some ideas look so smart, you wish they had been developed more. The head-swopping premise of the game is well worked out, as is the idea of stuffing each level with secret bonus points that most players are left itching to find. Some of the keymasters are breathtaking in conception (Spinderella, for example). Although this is a platform game, the pace and level of action is nearer that of a shoot 'em up. Somewhere between Treasure's stupendous Gunstar Heroes and the pretty Mcdonald's Treasureland, Dynamite Headdy hovers around the territory of all-time classic.



GIVE GOOD HEADDY



The little headcases wandering about levels offer the chance of a temporary change of cranium. Pop the headcase and stick one of these heads on, and have your abilities enhanced in the following ways:

SPEED HEAD
All Headdy's athletic abilities — running speed, jumping distance and head-throwing powers — are increased.

HAMMER HEAD
The power of the head throw is intensified.

BOMB HEAD
A time-fused cherry bomb replaces Headdy's normal visage. Thrown to detonate.

HOMING HEAD
Killer stars flow from the mouth of this useful head, and home in on their targets.

RADIATING HEAD
Killer stars flow in compass directions from the mouth of this devastating head.

TIME HEAD
When collected, time stands still and Headdy has a valuable few seconds of enemy vulnerability.

SPIKE HEAD
Increased offensive butting, and useful as a wall-climbing implement.

SHRUNKEN HEAD
Whilst wearing this, Headdy becomes a midget replica of himself, opening up new areas and revealing the little people.

TRIPLE HEAD
A triple-crowning glory, endowing Headdy with a hat-trick of craniums at once.

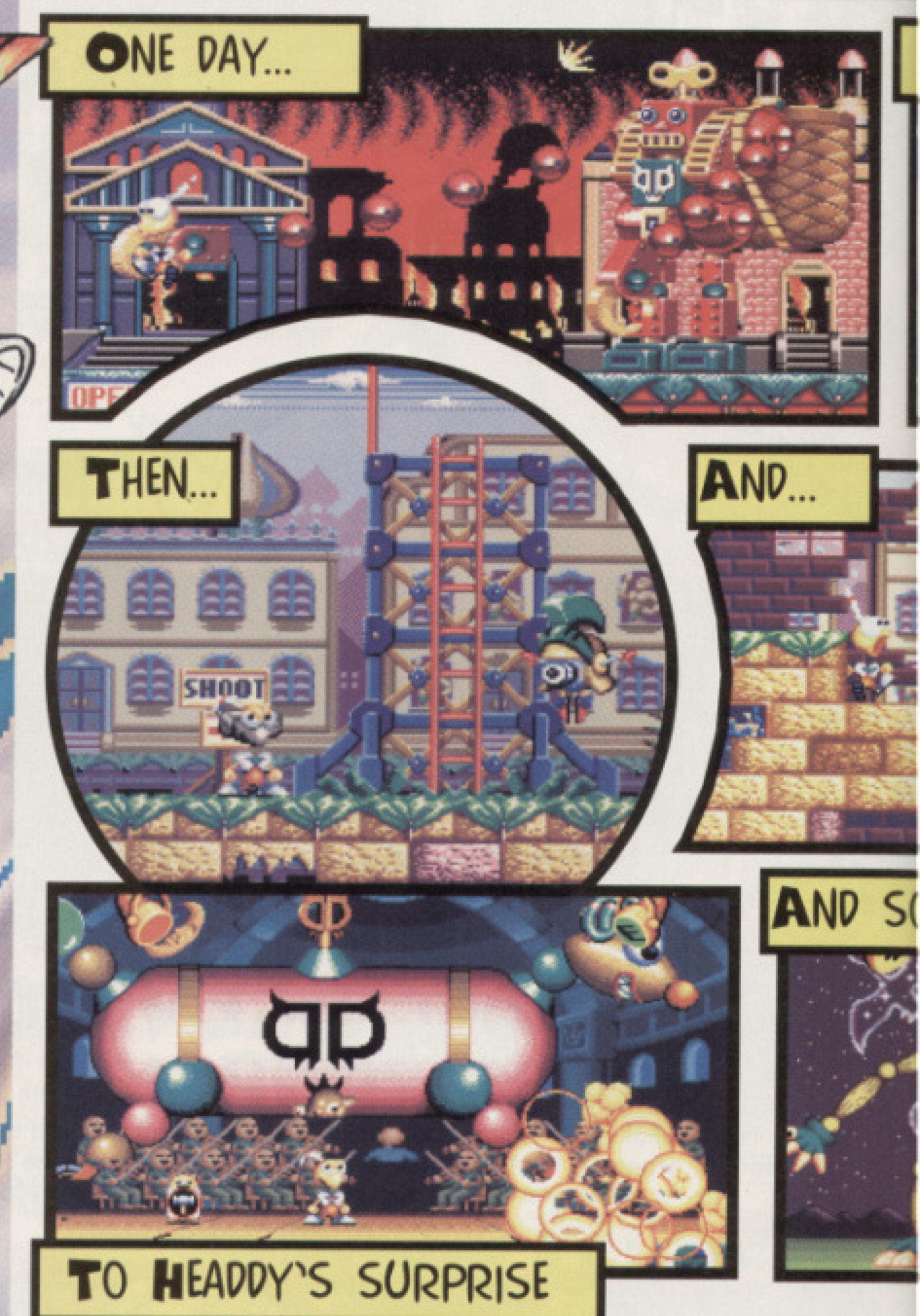
CORONA HEAD
Like the halo of a saint, Headdy is surrounded by a ring of unearthly fire, bringing destruction upon his assailants.

HOOVER
Nothing sucks like... Headdy with his nozzle attachment. A clever device with which to collect hard to reach bonuses.

SLEEPY HEAD
Fancy a night cap? This head may leave Headdy exposed, but a little nap can do him the world of good.

DEAD HEAD
The only useless Head and to be avoided. Leaves Headdy slow and defenceless and cannot be removed voluntarily.

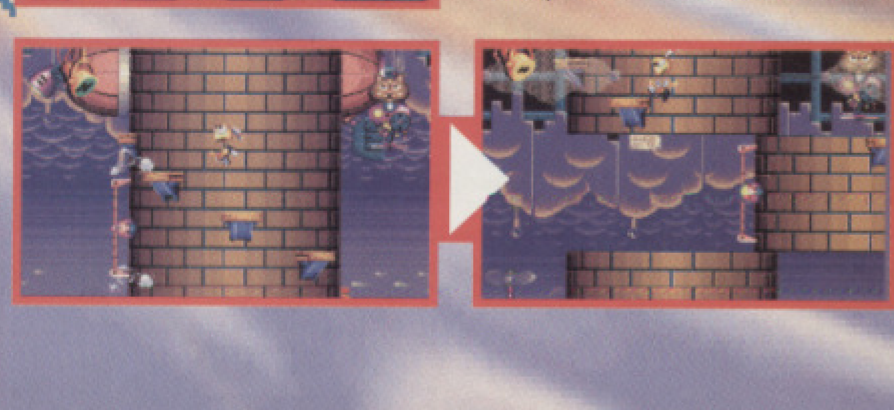
INVISIBLE HEAD
Spookily reduces Headdy to a shadow of his former self. Nothing can hurt him — but he can still hurt them.



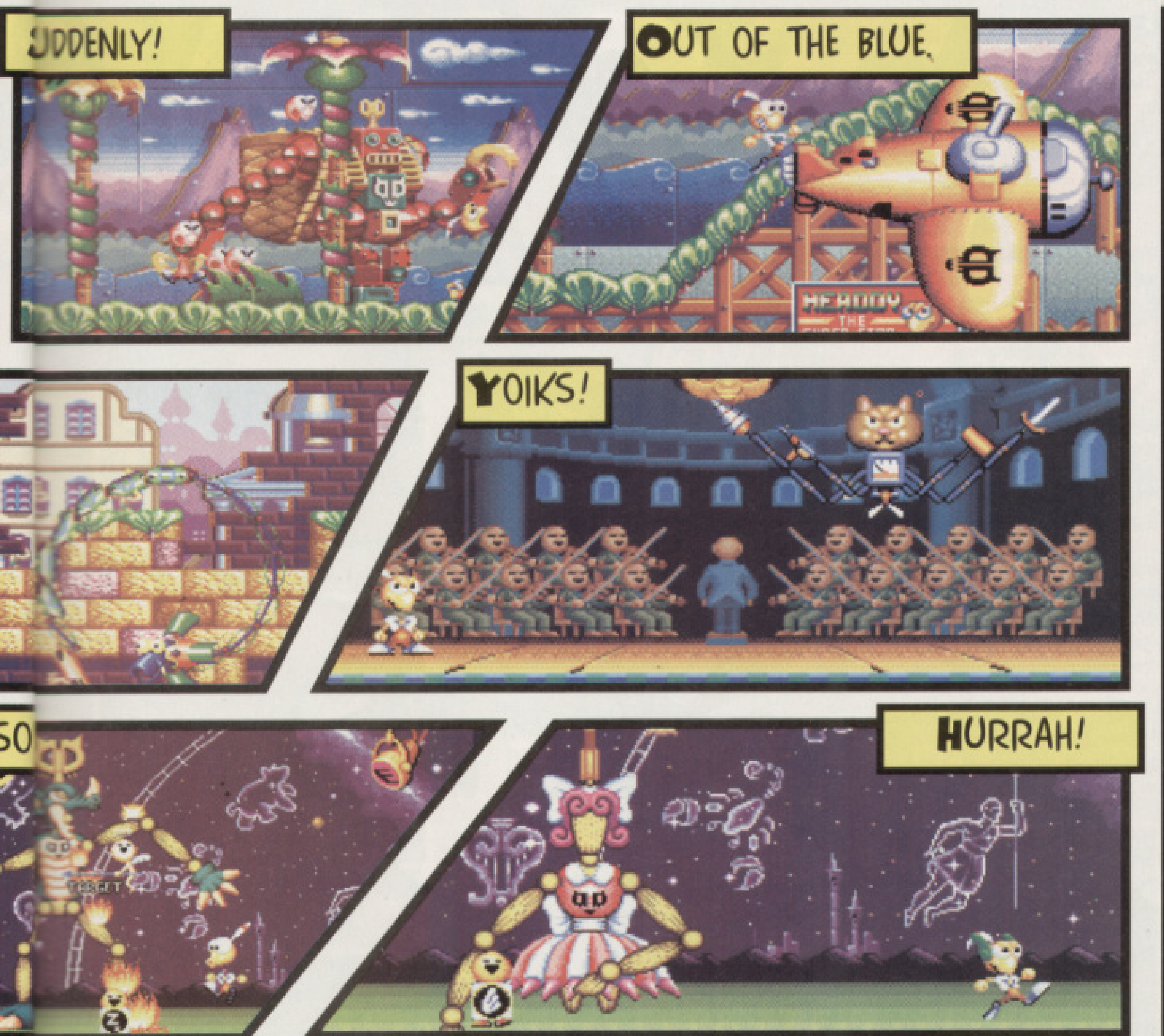
WHERE'S THE POINT?

By accident or design, you will come across Headdy's secret bonus points. These awards are bestowed when you perform a specific act, the first being the destruction of the robot in The Getaway. Secret bonus points are always announced by a sexy voice — or the appearance of a brass band!





▼ *We regret any inconvenience caused, but this tower is out of order.*



GRAPHICS 94

▲Treasure make the use of state of the art Megadrive effects look easy and commonplace. Great character sprites and bosses.

SOUND 96

▲In stereo, Headdy plays games with your ears, in a brilliant use of surround techniques. Some of the best scored music for the *Megadrive*.

PLAYABILITY 93

▲The game is a constant surprise with new gameplay elements on each level.
▼A bit of a slow starter, Headdy gets going on level 3.

LASTABILITY 90

▲Quite tough, even with one level of play. You'll play for points, you'll play for bonuses and you'll go back for the fun of it. Continues must be earned too.

VFM 91

▲Like no other game in your collection, and these days only the new classics are worth adding to it.

OVERALL 93

If you have your head firmly screwed on, you'll get Headdy as soon as it comes out. No ifs, no butts!

COMMENT



PAUL

What's going on? First we have the superb Earthworm Jim, and now we have Headdy. With two excellent games in such close proximity to each other it seems as if manufacturers have finally got the message that people will no longer put up with duff platformers. A lot of time and effort has been put into every aspect of the game to create a finished product that is a joy to play. But the most important, and for me the most impressive feature, has to be the innovation. Every level is a fresh experience, a cultivated piece of gameplay. The non-linearity of the levels leaves the player constantly discovering new routes and hidden bonuses. The boss characters have individual weaknesses, and thanks to the carefully calibrated learning curve they never become too infuriating. Headdy is so beautifully crafted it will remain a classic for

HEAD FOR HEIGHTS

From the top of the Puppet Tower, Headdy makes a leap of faith and enters two levels of side-scrolling flying action. Three different kinds of laser-spitting bird brains may be pecked up.





CREDIT TO: TOM GUISE FOR HEADDY SKETCHES

SPA

ROCKETKN



1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE	£49.99
BY	KONAMI
RELEASE	NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES:0-4
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS:EXCELLENTE!
GAME DIFFICULTY:
HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
100,000

ORIGIN
A follow-up to Konami's hit Rocket Knight Adventures. A similar sort of game, but with a whole new engine.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Traverse the wide platform levels, using sword and rocket pack to defeat the pig hordes of Devotindos.

For their second opossum-based platform game Konami chose the title 'Sparkster'. Interesting. For a game called Rocket Knight Adventures, surely Rocket Returns or Rocket's Revenge are titles full of promise. But that's Konami for you, flying in the face of convention. They named it after their heroic savour of Elhorn, V8 mammal in doc martens.

With a plot about as surprising as the script to a Liptonice advert the evil forces of the Porcine Devotindos Empire have again used mind-control as a means to enslaving Elhorn. And once more, the marsupial has to traverse many levels and destroy their demonic engines. However, instead of marking time, Konami have rebuilt the Rocket Knight idea with an entirely new game engine, new powers, and created a sequel with its fair share of surprises. Surprisingly, as Angus would say in the cold lemon tea ad....



CHARGE DE PHAROAH

Konami games usually have more bosses than the average NHS hospital and Sparkster has...even more! Two or three per level, spread over each of the eight stages. Happily, they often provide the high points of the game, with cunning attack patterns and defences.

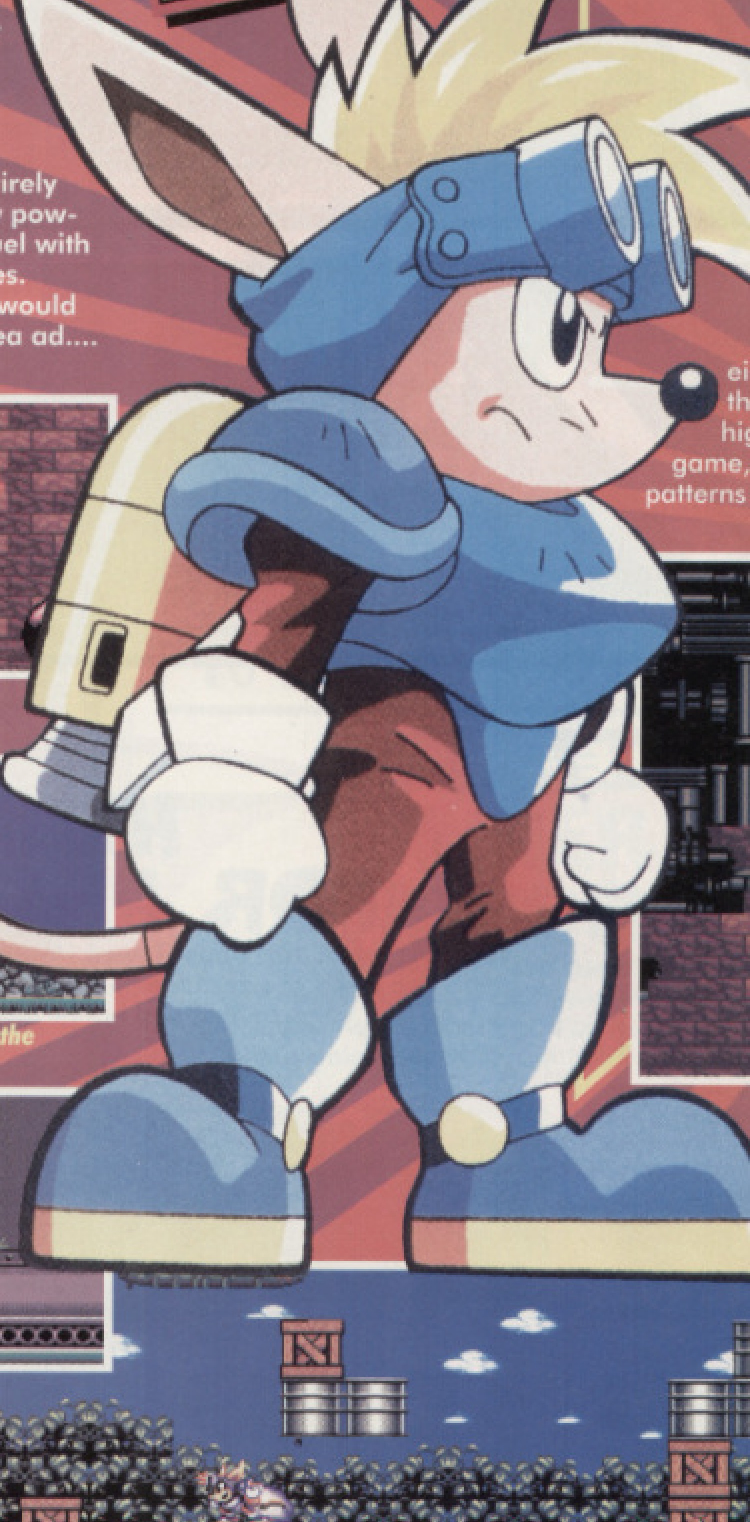


▲ Hiii-yaaa!



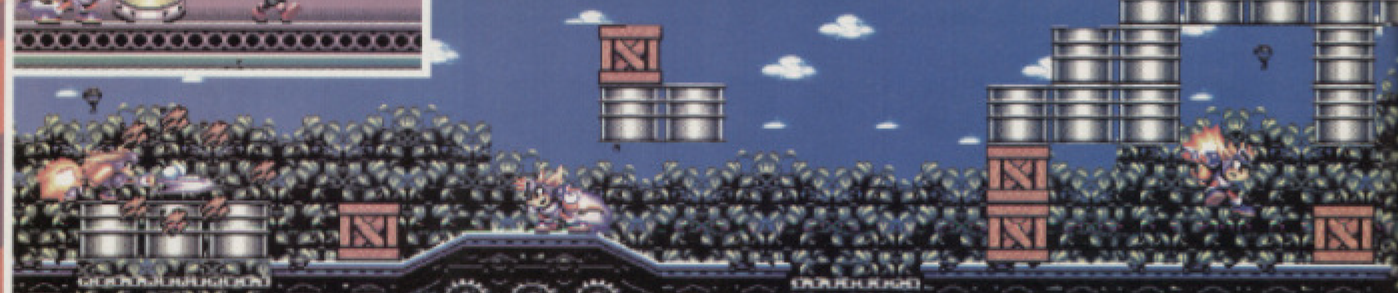
▲ Better have a look under the bonnet again.





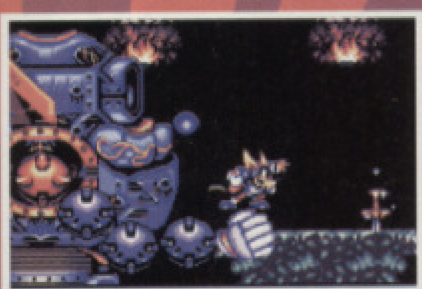


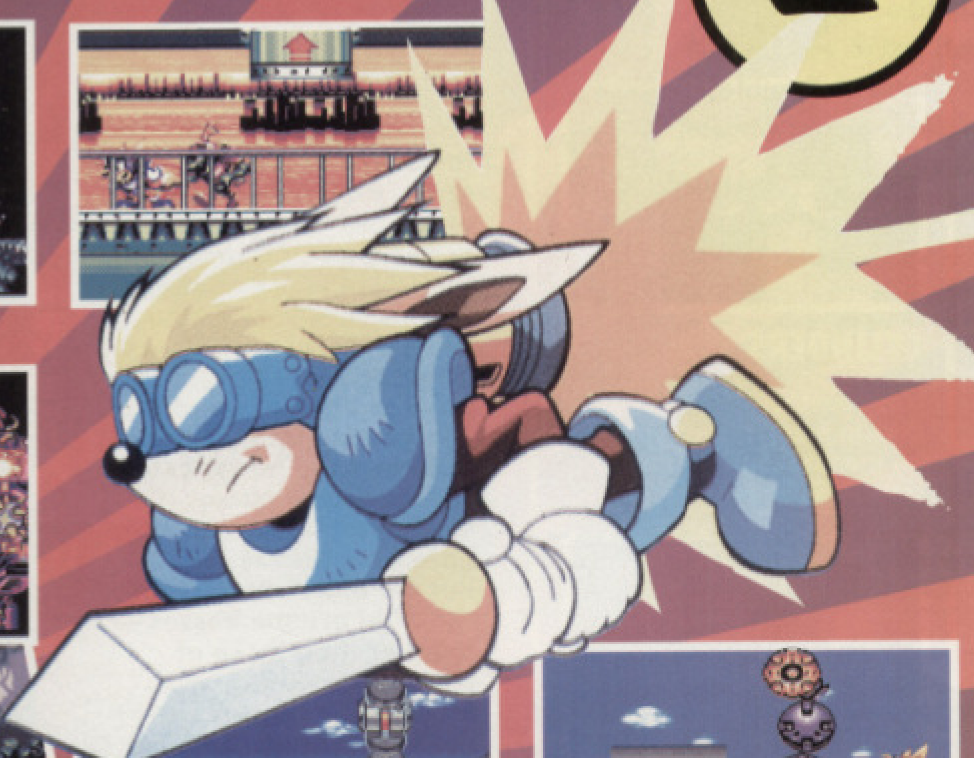
▲ "I'm a large demon spawn and I'm going to kill you, I'm afraid".

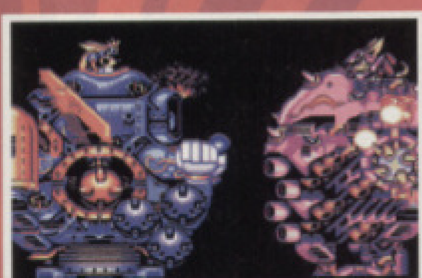


RKSTER

IGHT ADVENTURES 2

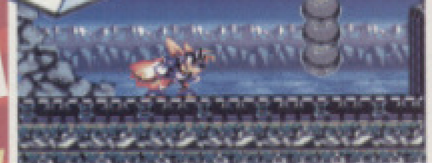


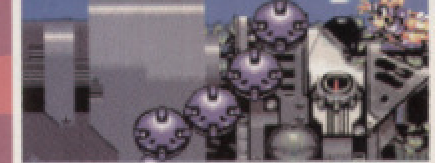




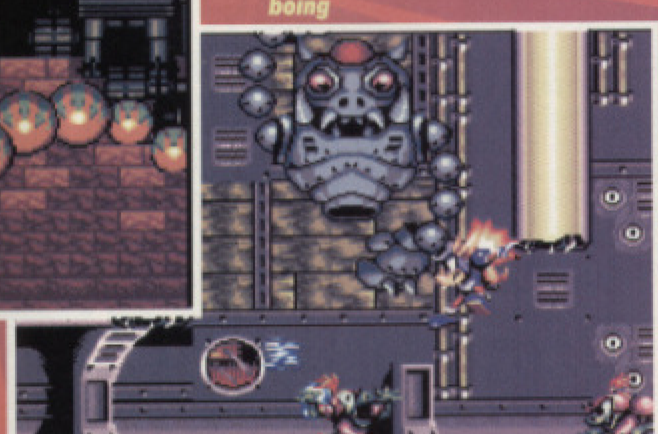


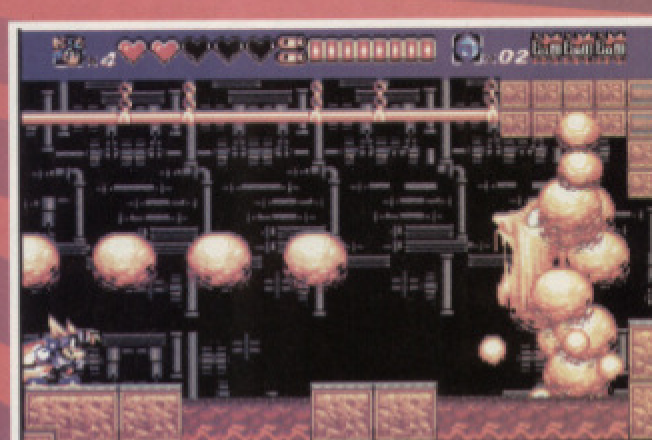
▲ *I like bouncing boing, boing, boing*











JEWELLRY

BOMB

INSTANT JET

FIRE SWORD

FULL HEALTH

RED GEM

EXTRA HEALTH

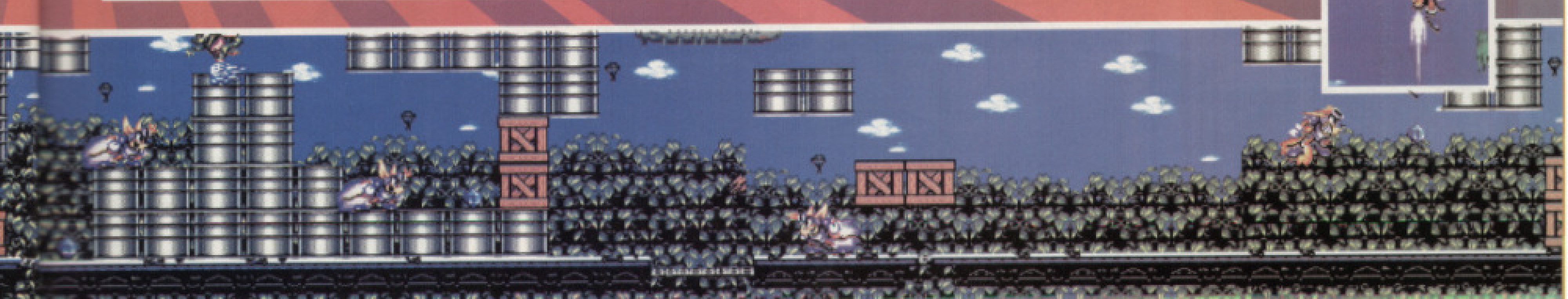
BLUE GEM

Blue and red gems pepper the layouts. Picking up as many as possible is a wise course of action, as every ten gems activate Sparkster's bonus wheel. An object is selected at random on falls on his head — a smart way to earn extra lives.

STRAP ON

The rocket pack is the basis of Sparkster amazing powers, and the key to the game's playability. Available power is indicated by a strip on the info bar. If this is lit, Sparkster is ready to jet off, and the longer you leave it the more powerful the thrust. Unlike the first game, the bar powers up automatically, making the game play faster. If no direction is selected when the pack is ignited, Sparkster does a standing spin. In both instances, he's invulnerable to attack.





COMMENT

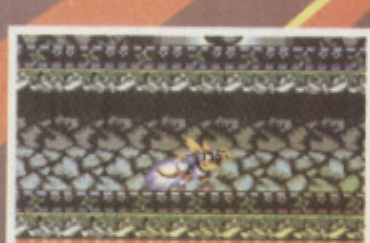


STEVE

I missed the first Rocket Knight game first time round, but when I did eventually get to see it I wasn't that impressed. True, the graphics were smart and there was a lot in it, but it was all a little too routine and I came away pretty unimpressed. Still, this all singing, all dancing sequel features enough improvements to satisfy even a miserable sod like me. The levels are massive and can be tackled in a number of ways, and the rocket pack is much easier to use than before speeding up the game immensely. These improvements and a wealth of new bosses and icons make Sparkster a sequel which far outstrips the original in both the looks and playability stakes — not to mention the majority of platformers doing the rounds at the mo. Sequels rarely outshine the original, but Sparkster has and becomes the video game equivalent of Aliens and T2 in doing so — a real rarity.

EXPLORERS

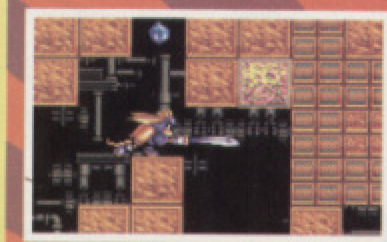
The level layouts of Sparkster are very different to the linear style of Rocket Knight, and most platform games. Like Sonic 3 there is a fair amount of choice of route. On the first level it's possible to avoid some of the boiler bosses in preference to others on conveyor belts. Stage 2 is a puzzling labyrinth set in pyramid, with some trap routes and bonus rooms.



GAME FEATURES

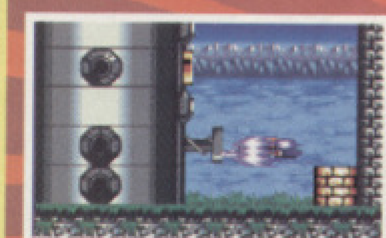
BLOCKY PUZZLE

In the Egyptian themed levels, some routes lead to tricky trap chambers. This one consists of a tumbling set of 'Breakout' blocks.



CYLINDERS

Unscrew the rotating cylinders to escape trap rooms on the first stages. There are several different types.



MONORAILS

Using your tail, run the rails, taking out carts of pig guards with you. Rails make up a fair portion of stage two as well.







COMMENT



GUS

The only reason not to buy this game is that you are sick to the darkest recesses of your molars with platform games and feel nauseous at the sight of one. Otherwise, Sparkster is one of the finest examples of the genre and though it never offers jaw-dropping surprises, there's a profusion of challenge, excitement and satisfaction lurking within. The graphics are variable, but vary from very good to blinkin' wonderful. The game engine is brand new, and the freedom to choose routes makes it a much more dynamic experience than Rocket Knight. But the glace cherries on the icing are the bosses — tougher than those of Dynamite Headdy, and scarier. The huge beast at the end of Stage 2, where you have to crisscross a massive vault constantly is as white-knuckle a moment of any game at the moment. A product of quality — like a Saville Row suit or an Axminster carpet.





GRAPHICS — 90

▲The Sparkster character never looked better, and the variety in graphics for each stage is constant.

SOUND — 86

▲Fabulous effects, and stirring martial music.
▼The use of sound is pretty predictable and tends to be lost in the action.

PLAYABILITY — 91

▲Sparkster's strong suit. Takes a while to get started, but a huge amount of thought has gone into the game.

LASTABILITY — 90

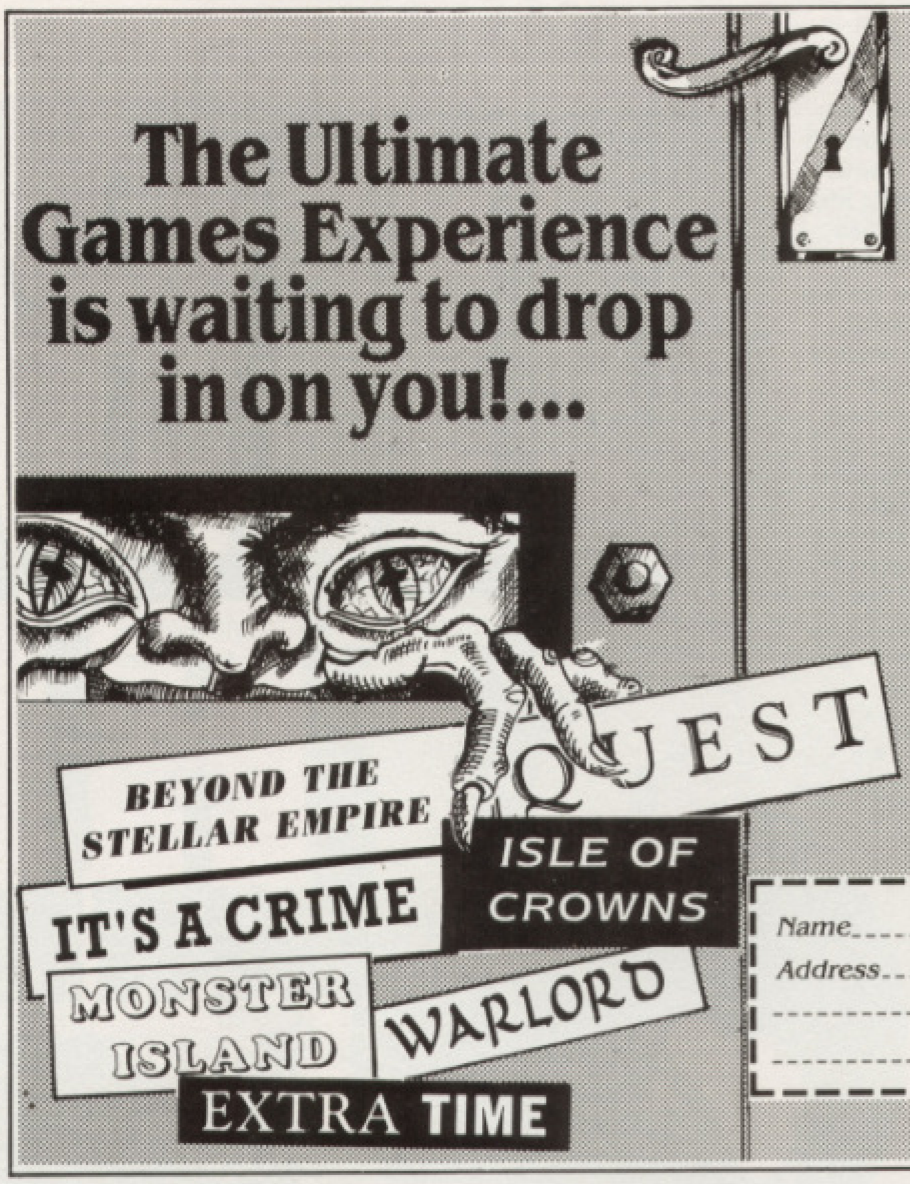
▲Much harder than Rocket Knight, perhaps reaching a near-perfect point of encouraged frustration.

VFM — 87

▲Priced at the standard for 16MEG, you can at least be sure of quality and longevity.

OVERALL — 91

As good as anything we're seeing at the moment, Sparkster shows Konami up as the master craftsmen they are.



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1 PLAYER | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE	£44.99
BY	EA
RELEASE	NOW

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE
REACHED LEVEL 3

ORIGIN
This is the third offering in the Strike series, being preceded by the rather topper Desert and Jungle Strikes.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Save the world in true gung-ho style by blasting all and sundry and completing various missions.

URBAN STRIKE

Sometimes a man's gotta do, what a man's gotta do and if that something involves world-wide genocide... hey, that's life. Unfortunately, one individual has got this very idea into his head and because he's a raving nutter *and* an ultra-powerful, mega-rich media mogul means this is no loony pipe-dream —, this is real life. As such, unless somebody somewhere can do something to stop him it's going to be a case of sitting comfortably, placing your head between your legs and kissing your jacksy goodbye!

In this third Strike game, the year is 2006 and the aforementioned media mogul, H. R. Malone, means to disrupt the world peace which has prevailed for the past decade by accumulating an army comprised of all the military warmongers made redundant when tranquillity reigned. With these newly-amassed men, Malone is now planning to blow the living daylights out of the world at large — starting with the United States. Only your, an elite member of the UN Special Task Force and your trusty chopper can stop him. Go to it soldier, your country needs you!





Your mission directives take you all over the United States and South America where you are given specific tasks to complete either on foot, in your faithful Thunderhawk Attack chopper, in an M-4 Armoured assault Tank or in a heavily-armoured Osprey III transport 'copter. Here's a run down of where you'll go:

HAWAII
Flush out the scum from the Visitors' Centre, and collect the Telescope Mirror and place both on a waiting boat. Batter the stealth subs, rescue a plastic surgeon for a bit of facelift then finish the enemy bridge and rescue some Green Berets before lunch. Phew!

BAJA OIL RIGS
Get rid of the radar station as only you know how, splatter the small oilrig, rescue some passengers from the jaws of hungry sharks then take out a few more targets before entering the main oil rig.

MAIN RIG
Relying on your trusty feet, take out the gun cams and enemy fighters then find good guy agent Maverick for the code to the beacon. Set the air strike beacon and run like hell!













▲ *Rig me! There's a bloomin big 'copter outside.*

▼ *Steve and Gus arrive at Clacton pier next month.*

COMMENT

PAUL

I have to agree wholeheartedly with Lucy on the chronic case of sequelitis. Those who are nuts about the 'Strike' series, will relish every moment, but for the rest, I'm sure there will be some disappointment over the lack of surprises. The urban bits aren't quite as metropolitan as they could be. The missions tend to be a little long winded at times; and the platform bits are severely graphically challenged. So why did I get such a kick out of this game? Quite simply because it's the best shoot 'em up to appear in ages. The 'copter control is unique in efficiency and playability, making it a joy to fly. Let's face it, we've been spoilt by its predecessors, and by anyone's standards Urban is a class piece of software.



MEXICO

Rescue the scout team, annihilate the enemy camp, rescue defence contractors who are under imminent attack from enemy paratroopers, steal Malone's Ground Assault Vehicle plans. Next, take the controls of a GAV to destroy other GAVs. The grand finale involves dropping a smart bomb on Malone's factory doorstep.

SAN FRANCISCO

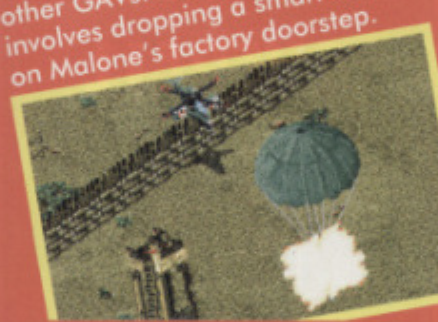
Blow up the bombs on the Golden Gate and Baybridge, take out the radio tower and Malone's west coast HQ. Having done that, now wipe out the Presidio tank depot with smart bombs before destroying the research centre and any weapon prototypes.

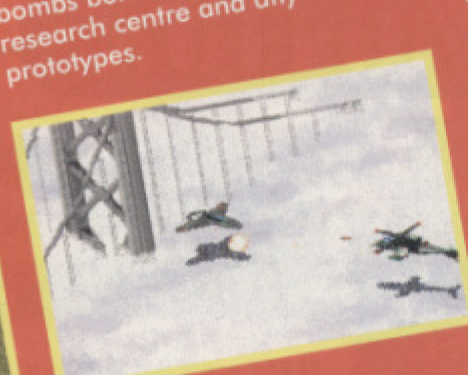
ALCATRAZ

The famous prison of Alcatraz was bought by Malone in 1999. On foot again, blast the motion sensors, grab weapon blueprints, destroy the weapon stashes,.grabbing what you can. Finally locate and free Agent Long-Haul who shows you to the exit.

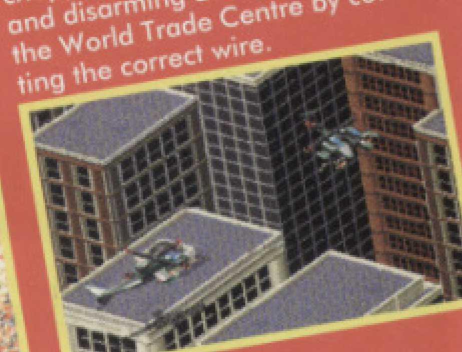
NEW YORK

Bomb over the sky-scrapers of Manhattan where your tasks involve taking out monitoring devices, blasting Malone's financial centres, rescuing civilians from burning buildings, blasting choppers, rescuing world leaders and disarming a time bomb in the World Trade Centre by cutting the correct wire.





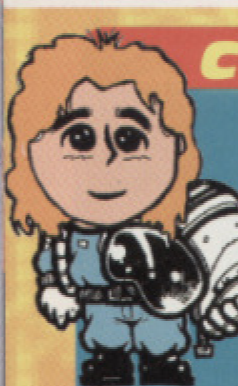












COMMENT

LUCY

Dakka-dakka-dakka, booooom, Armageddon! Wow, I love this game me. Urban Strike is a thoroughly enjoyable sequel — a thinking man's (or woman's) shoot 'em up which requires thought and strategy rather than just mindless blasting. Having said that although this *is* a sequel and although it's a good game in its own right and controls markedly better than its predecessors, graphically it's not up to the excellent standard set by Jungle Strike — the San Francisco fog, for example, looks like snow — and there aren't as many missions. Okay, there are the new walking around bits but these are graphically sub-standard, jerky and difficult to control. However, despite the down points, this game has kept me enthralled for a week, it's highly challenging and definitely worth a look.



LAS VEGAS

Fly over neon-lit Vegas at night to capture the radar commander. When he gives the location of radar sites destroy them. Next, clear the roads of enemy vehicles, knock out the power grid, before capturing and entering the casino.



UNDERGROUND

Take out the mighty laser then prepare for the final showdown with Malone himself — beware for dirty tricks!



CASINO

After entering the lush gambling hall, take out pit bosses, and blast open the change booth in order to rescue prisoners. To discover the entrance to Malone's hideout find sexy VIP. She'll show you where Malone's hideout is. Destroy change booth gun sites, ride shuttle car down to Malone's underground lair.



GRAPHICS 88

▲Intricate backgrounds and thoroughly realistic vehicles.
▼The 'on foot' levels are distinctly ropey.

SOUND 85

▲Great explosion sounds and reasonable accompanying tunes.
▼There are no real helicopter sounds.

PLAYABILITY 90

▲Excellent controls in the vehicle sections and a good range of different missions.
▼The 'on foot' sections really let it down with jerky movement and

LASTABILITY 89

▲Many intricate missions and missions within missions and just the right level of difficulty to keep you engrossed.

VFM 88

▲Fairly tough gameplay means you won't finish this in a hurry so it's well worth forking out for.

OVERALL 89

A solid sequel which could have been better in places but which should keep Strike and shoot 'em up fans more than happy.

GENOCIDE IN MOTION

There are four different modes of transport in Urban Strike. These include:



THUNDERHAWK ATTACK CHOPPER: This is a very different vehicle from the last Strike games the cream of 21st Century machinery, loaded with the best modern weaponry including guns, missiles and rockets. The pilot can also pick up other objects such as smart bombs to finish a job more effectively.



M-4 ARMOURED ASSAULT TANK: This rock hard tank is slow but very tough and with 5000 points of armour can withstand the most savage of attacks.



OSPREY III TRANSPORT 'COPTER: A large cumbersome vehicle, the Osprey is also heavily armoured and with it's 20 seating capacity is ideal for rescue missions.



FEET: For the first time, our hero can alight from the trusty copter and make his way on foot. Armed with rockets and gun power, these are mostly indoor missions and tend to involve (a) killing things (b) rescuing things and (c) defusing things (although not necessarily in that order).

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1-8 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
RACING

PRICE £44.99

BY CODEMASTERS

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
RACE 4 (1-PLAYER)

ORIGIN
The second Codemasters overhead racer based on the popular Galoob toy cars.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Race up to seven opponents over 26 treacherous microcosmic courses. Be first or second to qualify, and set track records.

MicroMachines 2 Turbo Tournament

Once upon a time there was a whipper-snapper. His name was Dizzy, and he got the console big boys in a bit of a tizzy. Under the tutelage of an impudent young company called Codemasters, he challenged the orthodoxy. And then Codies, as we affectionately know them, produced a wicked little racing game called Micro Machines. And a lot of people thought it was very smart, and a lot of people bought it.

And now...Codemasters are one of those big boys. People are prepared to take a sequel of Micro Machines very seriously — and thankfully so have the Codies. This second-parter has been in production almost since the original Megadrive success (which came a year after the NES version). Big trouble has gone into making these little cars streets ahead of their predecessors, making this the Meisterwork of matchbox mayhem par excellence.

BY A LENGTH

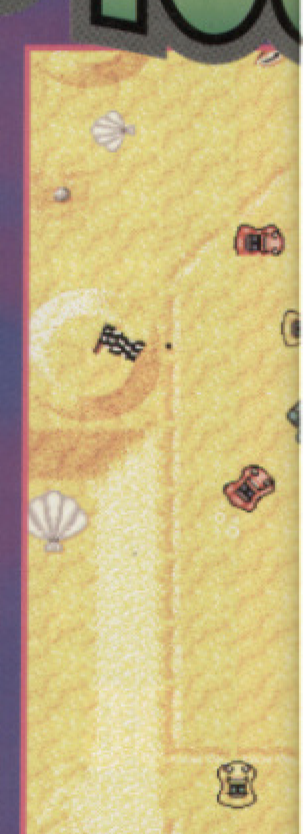
Gameplay is basically the same in any of the game modes. Using B to accelerate and left and right to turn, make your way round some torturous curves. In single player challenge mode, it's a matter of the first two to the finish qualify for the next round. In the head-to-head mode, the game is won and lost by filling all the dots of the colour bar. You start with four, and gain or lose dots by pulling away from your opponent by a screen's length. The multi-player games also use the colour bar, but three or four ways. Players who fall behind lose a dot and are suspended until someone gains a dot. The final option is a team championship with four teams playing in pairs for a joint victory.



▲ *"I were right about that saddle, though..."*



▲ *The red boat and the blue boat had a race...*



DIVERTED TRAFFIC

The courses in the original Micro Machines were imaginative, but pretty straightforward. In the sequel, most courses have specific hazards that can snare an unwary player, in addition to the stationary objects and narrow precipices, of course. Here's a selection:

FOREST



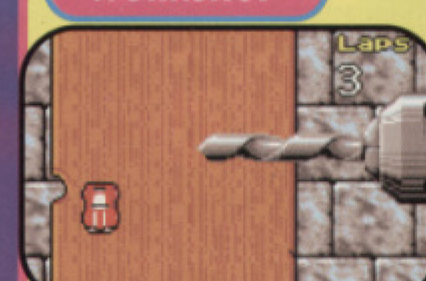
KNOTS
Areas of the course are weak and are dislodged by cars, leaving a potential chasm for others.

PINBALL



FLIPPERS
Straying too near these risks being spanged off course by an unseen player who fancies himself as a pinball wizard.

WORKSHOP



DRILLS
These bits encroach on a narrow area of the course and require exact timing and positioning for safe passage.

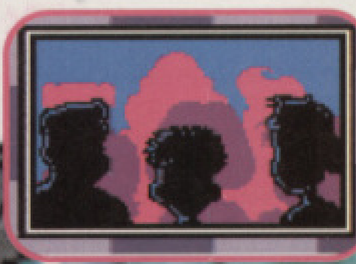


HEY YOU, WE'RE HAVIN' A PARTY!

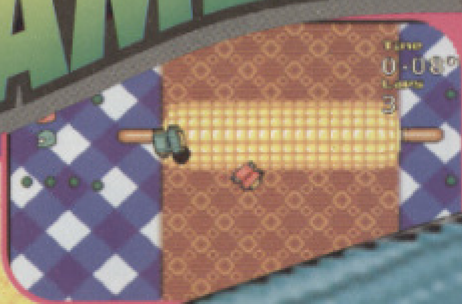
The amount of people you can have playing Micro Machines roughly equates to those you can cram into a phone box: eight. The first four of these are accomodated by the nifty J-Cart, which contains two extra joypad ports for no extra charge (as seen with Pete Sampras Tennis). This allows four-player simultaneous racing. A further four players can compete in a series of 'Mano-y-Mano' tournament playoffs. But taking communal gaming to its utter limit, Codemasters have designed a full eight-player game, where two people share each joypad! The technique was successfully used on Game Gear Micro Machines, and should go down a storm with 16-bit owners. The only snag we can envisage is the expense of making tea and sarnies for all those mates you'll be inviting round.











▼ *Now there's something you don't see everyday.*



▲ *"It's in the sand! I'm not being much help am I, Dad..."*

BEACH



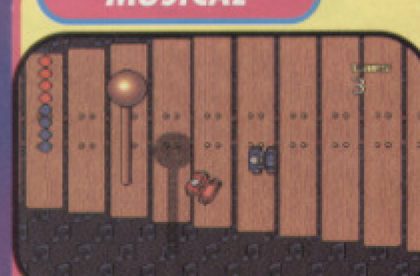
SANDSPITS
Narrow promontories form part of the course, but erode rapidly with each successive lap, making crossing harder each time.

ROADSTERS



TRAFFIC LIGHTS
Brilliant fun — the first car through triggers a lights change, placing the laggers in the flow of oncoming traffic.

MUSICAL



XYLOPHONE
A perilous trip over the wooden bars, with the beaters playing a tune — musically-minded players can actually work out the movement.

KITCHEN



FERRY
Itchy fingers have to wait as players cross a brimming sink on a slow moving sponge. Embarkation is the tricky part

COMMENT



STEVE

Hard as it is to believe, Micro Machines II takes its predecessor look positively tired. The are so many incredible features in this turbo-charged sequel that it will be ages before you see them all. Every aspect and option has been expanded upon, with more players, extra courses and hazards, and better vehicles — yet none of these clutter the simplistic but madly addictive gameplay. My personal favourite idea was the addition of the Micro Micro courses, where the races are even smaller and the majority of the twisting course can be seen on the screen at once. Quite simply, Micro Machines is the best racer since... ooh, the first one at least. By concentrating on the playability and variety, Codemasters have left the likes of Combat Cars and its kin stalled at the lights whilst this sequel roars into pole position.

The Original Micro Machines 2 Turbo Tournament



CAREERING CARS

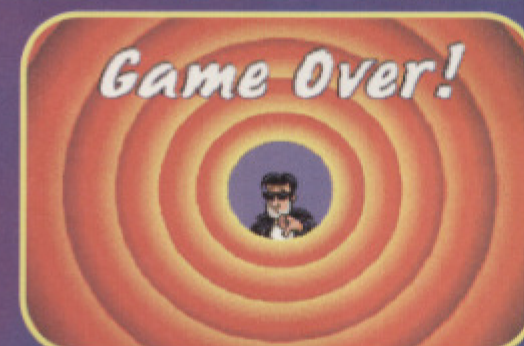
The full battery back-up effectively creates 'careers' for each of the sixteen possible players. In multiplayer mode, players accumulate points over successive races. These are recorded, along with any name changes. There is also a series of practice courses where fastest laps and races are saved as records on the cart.







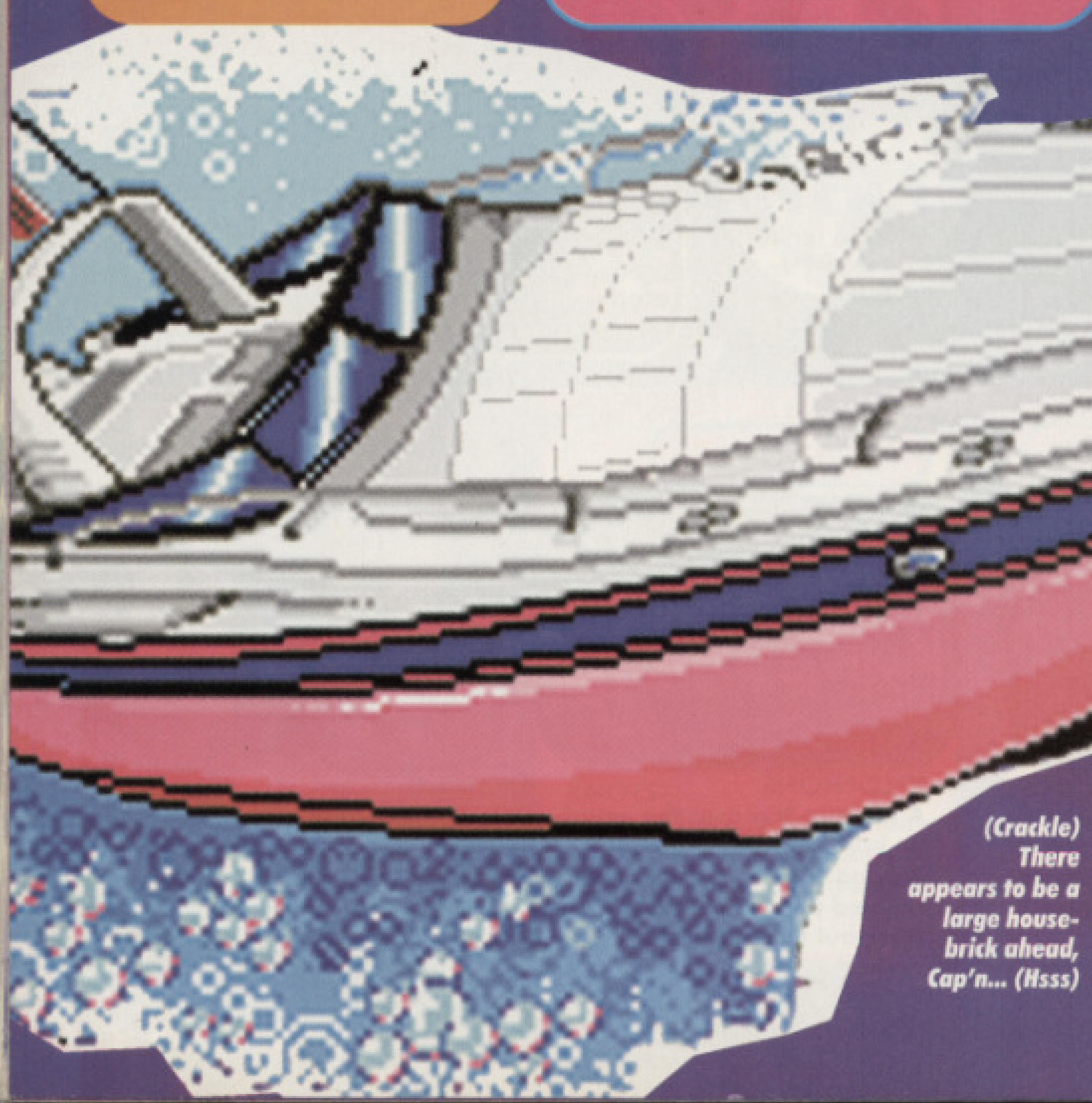
▲ *Can you get some charcoal briquettes and a Topic while you're in there?*



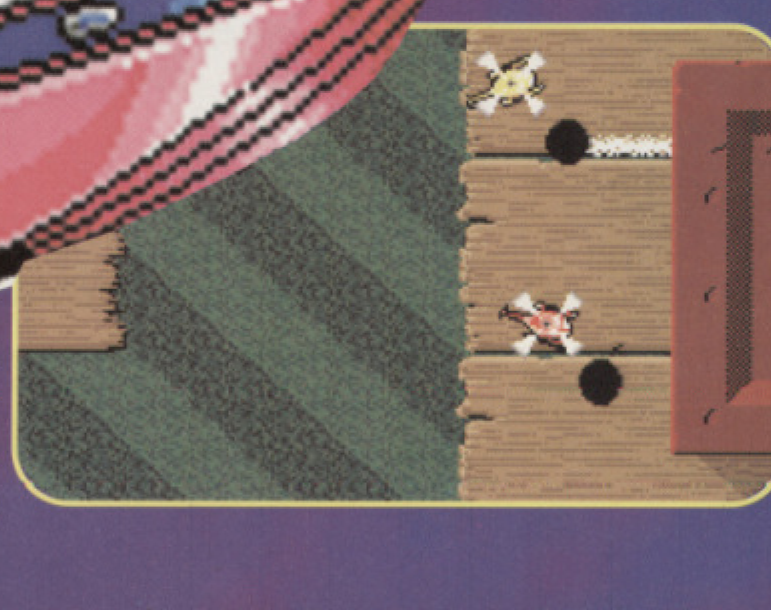
▲ *My, what a great picture to caption!*

STAR VEHICLE

You get to test drive more vehicles than the average Top Gear presenter — and not just cars. As well as trucks, roadsters, sportscars, buggies, Formula racers and Tri-cycles, think on about Hovercraft courses, helicopters and boats. The different vehicles are not just for graphic variety. Each has characteristic handling — a gliding sensation for the hovercraft, a slow acceleration on the heavy vehicles etc.



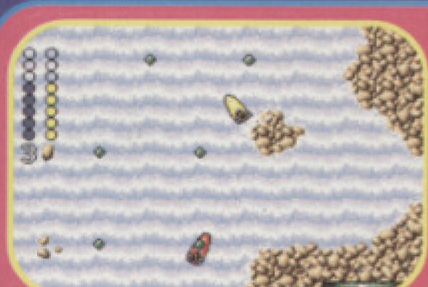
(Crackle) There appears to be a large housebrick ahead, Cap'n... (Hsss)



FACES, FACES, FACES

The number of race characters has been doubled. The computer characteristics allow you to pick real duff challengers, like Walter, and keep the good ones like Spider for yourself.







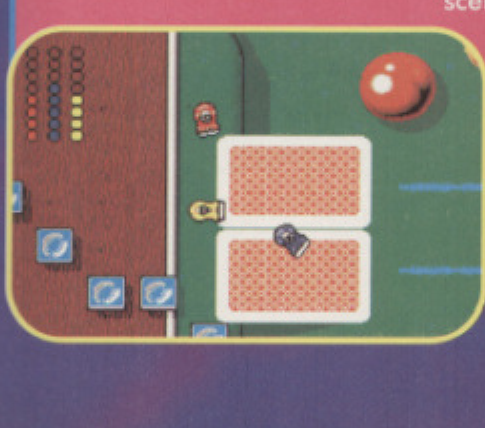
DINING OUT

There are dozens of courses packed onto the cart — just working out how many there is proves difficult. Apart from a core 26 single races, there are other tracks lurking in the cart. They cover all kinds of micro terrain: bathrooms, basements, pool tables, all with quirky interactive scenery.









COMMENT

GUS

The programmers at Supersonic would be great contestants on Brucie's Generation game, especially at the end: food mixer, cuddly toy, kitchen sink — since they seem to have packed everything worth remembering into this superlative sequel to one of the greatest games ever. Without losing an ounce of the playability of Micro Machines, Turbo Tournament sensibly expands it in every area: more characters, more players, more game modes, LOADS more courses, new vehicles, more scenery and new elements like traps and power ups. Neat ideas like the xylophone and the traffic pile-ups on 'Crossing Chaos' make this much more than a bigger version of Micro Machines. The graphics are considerably smarter, as is the sound (you'll love having a horn) and only Codies could countenance an eight player mode — without the need to buy any hardware save your joypad. Great value, endless playability even for a single player, and my candidate for game of the year.

GRAPHICS

84

▲ A vast array of backgrounds, from tree tops to sandy beaches, and rendered crisp as a cucumber with caramel-smooth scrolling.

SOUND

82

▲ The music is pretty damned good and the engine sounds, though whiny, suit well. The rubber-wearing screeches are worthy of Starsky and Hutch.

PLAYABILITY

95

▲ One of those magic formulas of gameplay, just like the original, but benefiting from expansion in every area.

LASTABILITY

93

▲ The battery back-up and sheer scope of the game ensure single players are well catered for. It's also multi-play dynamite.

VFM

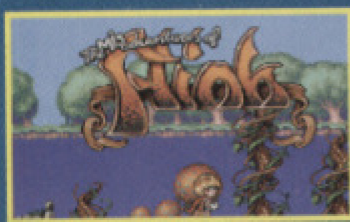
93

▲ The J-Cart is the best value for money product to appear this year for the Megadrive. Even if you have the original this is clearly worth it.

OVERALL

95

Micro Machines 2 exceeded all our expectations, and they were high! This will be the game you are playing most for many months to come.





1 PLAYERS | **8 MEG**

GAME TYPE
ADVENTURE

PRICE £39.99

BY PSYGNOSIS

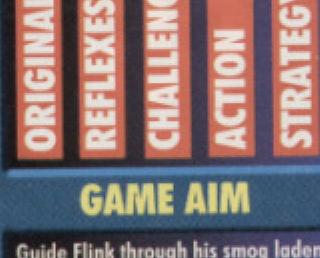
RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: VARIABLE
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: SLOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE
Complete the Apple Tree level.

ORIGIN
Developed by two European programmers, Flink combines the Teutonic penchant for fairy tales with platform puzzling action.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Guide Flink through his smog laden world to defeat Wizard Wainwright, find the four imprisoned Elders, and put an end to the pollution.

Imagica is a groovy kind of place. Resting peacefully in a corner of the Baltic Sea, all the inhabitants have to worry about is organic farming, measuring rainfall, and which pair of sandals to wear in the morning. Four Elders guard the peace and general contentment by ruling fair and just kingdoms. It's a good scene, man.

That is until an evil wizard known as Wicked Wainwright sets up shop in the supposedly dormant volcano in the north of the island. Being a bad sort, he wants the lot, the land, the people, and all the stocks of goat's cheese. In direct contradiction of all conventions, Wainy kidnaps the Elders, sealing them in four crystals. To deal with the people, the volcano is stoked with noxious chemicals to pollute their minds and place them under his control. Bummer. By chance an apprentice wizard, Flink, escaped the fumes of confusion, leaving him as the last hope of the people. Can young Flink find the four crystals and defeat Wainwright to save his people?





COMMENT



GUS

Flink's is a comely beast, every leaf, twig and rocky outcrop capturing the feel of a Grimm fairy tale, frankly a Black Forest gateux of Sara Lee proportions. And behind the foliage lies a well-thought out and cerebral platform game. Rather than the climaxes and outrages of platform games like Sparkster and Dynamite Headdy, Flink is a collection of minor moments. It's satisfying but hardly inspiring gameplay, compounded by Flink having a dose of the skids (slipping off platforms) and not being able to move particularly quickly. In some ways this is a Clarks' Commando of a game: sturdy and made to last (your parents would approve0 but neither fashionable or flashy — and let's face it, we'd all prefer to have winkle pickers

SPELLBOUND

Man cannot survive on stomp and slide attacks alone. As Flink progresses through his adventure, he collects, or is given scrolls containing the recipes to knock up the spells. The ingredients have to be found in chests or stolen from villagers. Sometimes the recipes are complete, other times it takes a bit of trial and error to work out the correct formula. Mind you, watch that magic meter!

QUICK GROW
Speeds up the growth rate of a plant, usually offering a lift up to a bonus chest.

SHRINK
A vital spell that allows the user to access extremely small places. Essential to Flink's success, see if you can find where.

DEMON
Materialises a helpful little devil, not much good initially, but upgradable to a real bonus.

GHOST
Another essential spell, needed to enter the metaphysical world.

SPIRIT BOMB
Imagica's equivalent of Semtex, blasts your enemies to smithereens.

DUST DEVIL
No, it's not a poxy little vacuum for doing the stairs! Blow foes off the platforms with mini tornadoes.



◀ *Flink hangs ten doing some leaf surfing.*



CRYSTALS AT DAWN

Being stuck in crystal ain't much fun for the poor old Elders. To make things worse, Wainwright has scattered the crystals throughout the island and placed them under guard of a big bad boss. After you've found their weakness, these fellas take one heck of a beating before they go down.

COMMENT



PAUL

In a 'ten a penny' platform game market, the product has to stand out from the rest of the crowd, and I was greatly impressed by Flink's contribution to the genre in terms of design and look. The European folklorey style lends itself nicely to the format and the Megadrive's capabilities. However, I was not quite so impressed by the gameplay, because there's nothing worse than a slow platformer. The character sprite of Flink is extremely sluggish, and takes an age to get moving, making it annoyingly difficult to catch up with goodies and escape bosses. On the subject of bosses, they are very thin on the ground, offering little reward after a painstaking attack pattern. The foundations are there, but without enough material to make this truly palatial.

GRAPHICS 84

▲ Imaginative sprite and backdrop design with a distinctive European flavour.

SOUND 81

▲ Good solid FX fitting to the action.
▼ The music remains pretty much the same throughout the entire game.

PLAYABILITY 75

▲ Nice mixture of puzzles and action.
▼ The character takes too long to speed up, resulting in frustrating deaths.

LASTABILITY 80

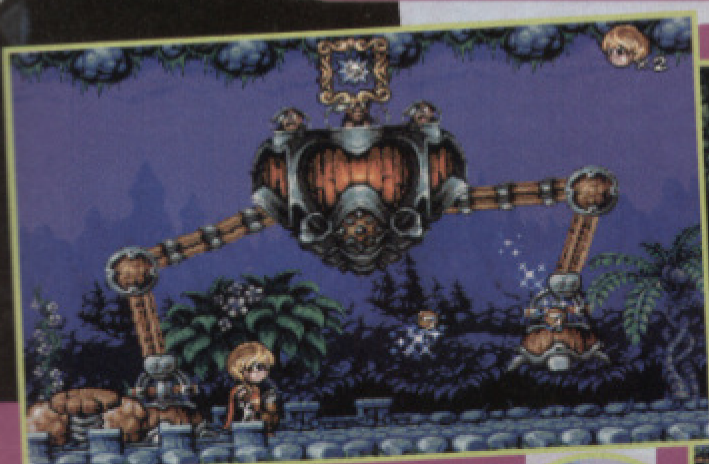
▲ Plenty of levels and hidden sections lengthened by a tough challenge.
▼ With infinite continues on Practice mode, it's far too easy to progress.

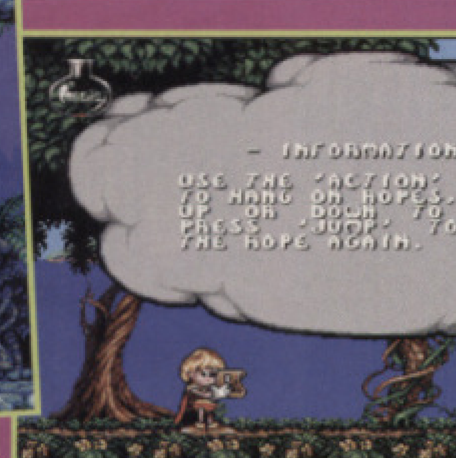
VFM 79

▲ A solid platform adventure for a reasonable price.

OVERALL 78

A platformer distinctly lacking in surprises and pace, made palatable by the novel and meticulous design.









PLATFORM

A real life saver for dangerous ledges and hard to reach bonuses.



MAGIC SHIELD

Sends magic orbs spinning around Flink's body to take out enemies en masse.



LIGHTNING

Even though it saps tons of energy, the result is a massive wipe out!





INFORMATION SCROLLS

To make things a little easier for the boy Flink, some old chests have been left lying around containing information scrolls. All kinds of tips and hints are to found hidden here, ranging from clues to find hidden places, to general gameplay help.

◀ *Suddenly last night's kebab didn't seem such a great idea.*

THE LAWNMOW



1-2 PLAYERS | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE TBA

BY TIME WARNER

RELEASE NOVEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
30,000

ORIGIN
Converted from Storm's Super NES game, and based on the Virtual Reality-themed motion picture.

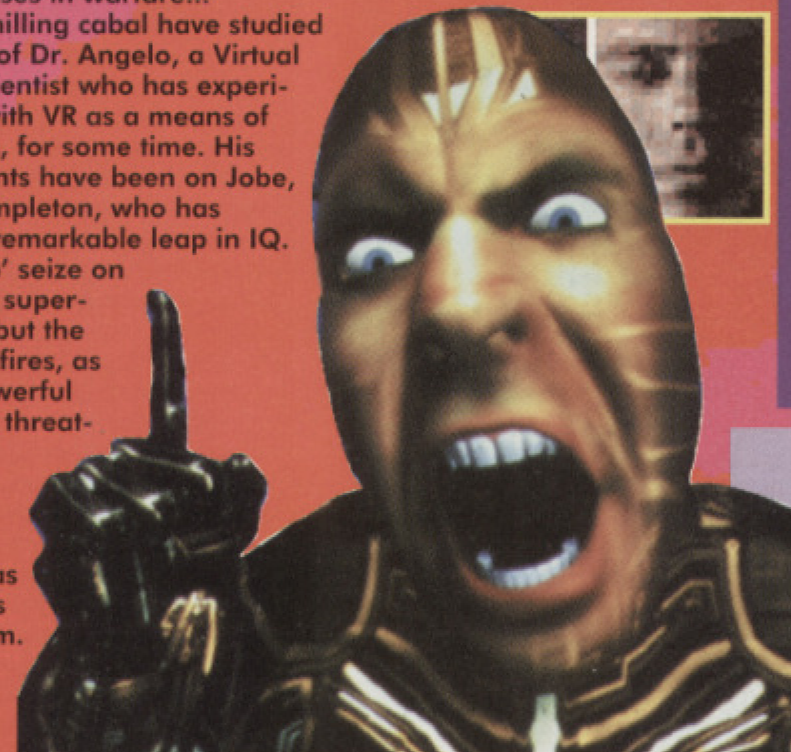
GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Defeat Jobe by entering the various cyber zones and destroying the terminals.

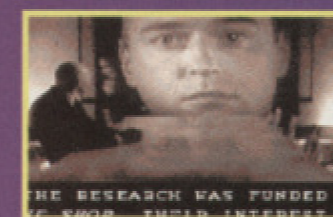
The emergence of Virtual Reality in the Eighties attracted the interest of some large sinister corporations in the United States. Organisations like 'The Shop' realised the potential of the technology to programme and manipulate individuals, giving them computer-like powers of intellect. Their interest in this process is limited to its uses in warfare...

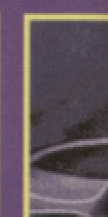
This chilling cabal have studied the work of Dr. Angelo, a Virtual Reality scientist who has experimented with VR as a means of education, for some time. His experiments have been on Jobe, a local simpleton, who has shown a remarkable leap in IQ. 'The Shop' seize on Jobe as a super-weapon, but the plan backfires, as an all-powerful Jobe CPU threatens the entire world. Only Angelo has the means to stop him.



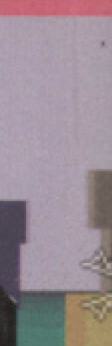








▲ *"The film you are about to see has been classified a PG."*

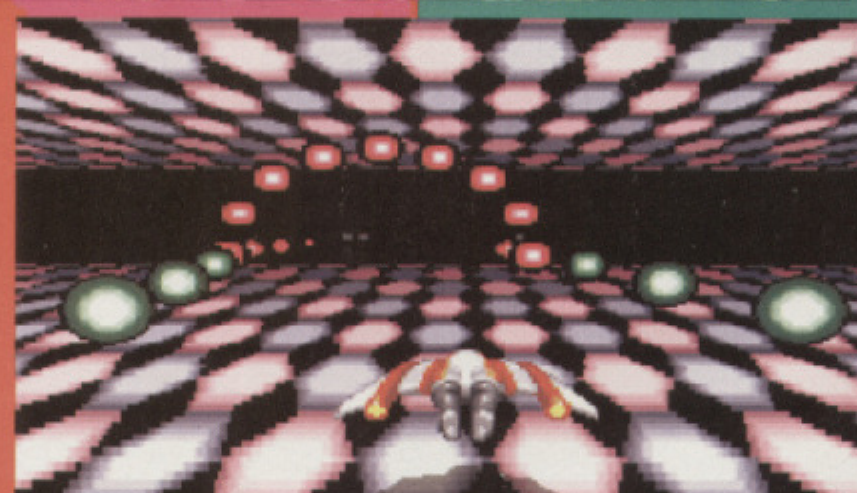


COMMENT



GUS

Virtual Reality has become a bit of a dirty word in Megadrive circles. Sega dropped their headset idea, and someone's spent God knows how long putting this together. It's a tough proposition recreating the dazzling effects of the film, and the programmers have aquitted themselves well, with the entertaining 3D sections. The scrolling shoot 'em up bits have also improved on the Super NES version, with some of the frsutration taken out. However, like the film, the whole affair is pretty lightweight. There are no real moments of climax or excitement.



LEAD LOVERS

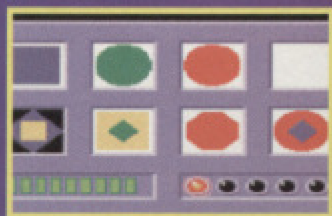
Shooting plays a fair part in the game. The Cyber War zones intersperse the Cyber Zones. In these you face a number of system sentinels poking out over battlements and firing at you. Outside there are many weapons to locate: plasma rifles, projectile throwers and a particularly neat energy wave.



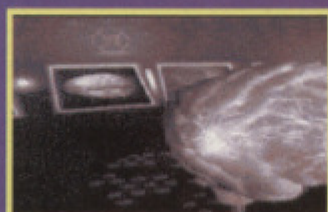


ER MAN









▲ *Brain TV — for the next step in human evolution.*

SMARTY PANTS

At the terminals which Angelo's disables, the security mechanism is five reflex puzzles that must be sorted out in a strict time limit. The puzzles use colours, numbers and shapes for you to determine which is next in the sequence.





GOING PLACES

There are several areas of play within the game diced up into succeeding sections. Different game styles prevail in each, described here in detail:

CYBER ZONES



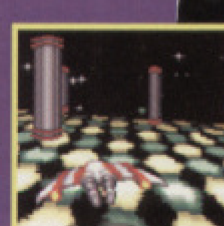
These are short 3D flying zones, where left and right direct Angelo through Jobe's defences. The themed areas are progressively more difficult, with dense barrier formations. Too many collisions means ejection from the system.

EXTERIOR ZONES



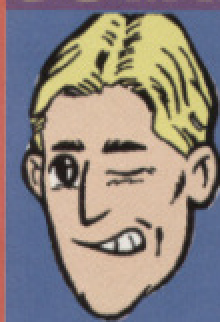
Reality central: Angelo makes his way on foot to the various entry points to the system. He is also looking for CDs, which increase his strength, and weapon power-ups. These areas are swarming with 'Shop' agents.

CYBER RUN



These long zones divide different level areas from each other. On a flying jet-bike, Angelo penetrates a psychedelic system defence mechanism, with front-mounted laser cannons

COMMENT



PAUL

We saw a preproduction version of this a few months back, and were well impressed with the stunning 3D sections. They're still there in all their glory but now run even faster than before and, consequently, are even better to look at and play. However, whilst Lawnmower Man impresses with its fast update and VRT scenes, a fault of the Super NES game is still present — the dodgy platform bits. With the advantage of hindsight, Time Warner have tried to tighten these sections up a little, but they are the first scene you play and this may prove initially off-putting. Even so, Lawnmower Man is a heady mixture of game styles which somehow gels together to create a very playable licence. Innovation is a rare enough thing, so make sure you don't miss this VR trip.





GRAPHICS 73

▲ Some of the 3D bits have you reaching for the Optrex — pretty lurid, man.
▼ The titchy graphics of the reality zones lack detail and variety.

SOUND 79

▲ The thumping soundtracks work well, especially in the racey Cyber Zone sections.
▼ Effects are pretty weak overall.

PLAYABILITY 71

▲ There is a fair amount of variety in the way the sections are tagged together.
▼ The sum of each of the simplistic parts is not that great.

LASTABILITY 71

▲ The three skill levels cover all abilities well, and hard is VERY hard.
▼ The initial frisson of excitement passes quickly with Lawnmower Man.

VFM 74

▲ Very much par for the course with this size of cart, and it is original.
▼ You may resent paying for some of the weaker sections...

OVERALL 73

Not the greatest moment in the history of the Megadrive, but not the worst either. An above average title made from weak material.



1 PLAYERS

GAME TYPE
SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE	£44.99
BY	CORE DESIGN
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 1
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAMF DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE

1ST DAY SCORE

Escape the Myrkoidian warship.

ORIGIN

From the team that developed Thunderhawk and Battle Corps, Soulstar has a similar look and feel to the previous two titles.

GAME BREAKDOWN



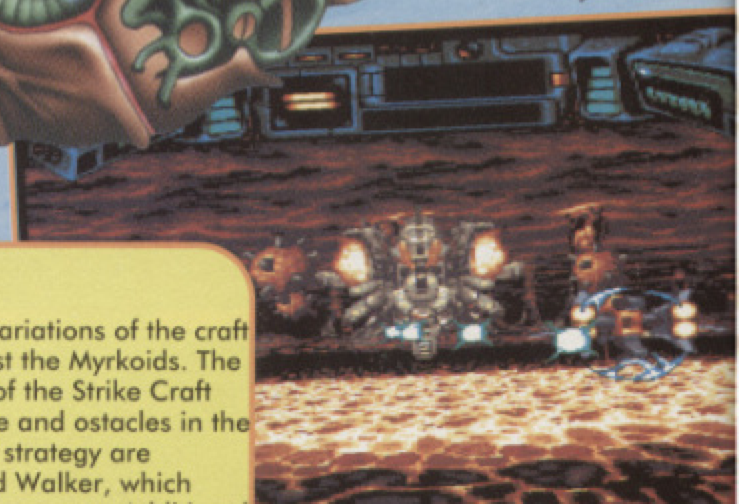
GAME AIM

Defend the Soulstar planetary system from the Myrkoids using a Strike Craft, a Turbo-copter, and a Combat Walker.



Darkness. Cold and desolate space. From out of nowhere comes a faint ringing. Growing persistently louder and louder, the gentle ring becomes a blaring klaxon. Until, it is suddenly silenced by a distant hiss. The room is bathed in light from the fluorescent tubing. A muffled yawn comes from the egg-like compartment standing among a sea of cables. "Morning Teddy," whispers a throaty humanoid voice. "Morning Bryk. Time to get to work!"

Awaking from his cryogenic slumber, Bryk is the last hope for the peace-loving planetary system of Soul Star. Marauding Myrkoid forces, reputed as the fastest planet strippers in the galaxy, have turned up on the doorstep to replenish their stocks of fuel and goodies. For centuries Bryk has pursued these plundering aliens, but this time he has them cornered for the scrap of the millenium!

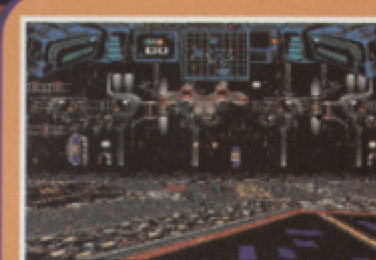


craftwork

Mastery of all three morph variations of the craft is a must in the battle against the Myrkoids. The manoeuvrability and speed of the Strike Craft assists in avoiding enemy fire and ostacles in the linear stages. More skill and strategy are required with the Copter and Walker, which exist in 3D 360 degree environments. Additional functions in these modes allow the Copter to alter altitude and the Walker to leap obstacles and enemies.



▼ *A base ship looms in the Myrkoid formations.*

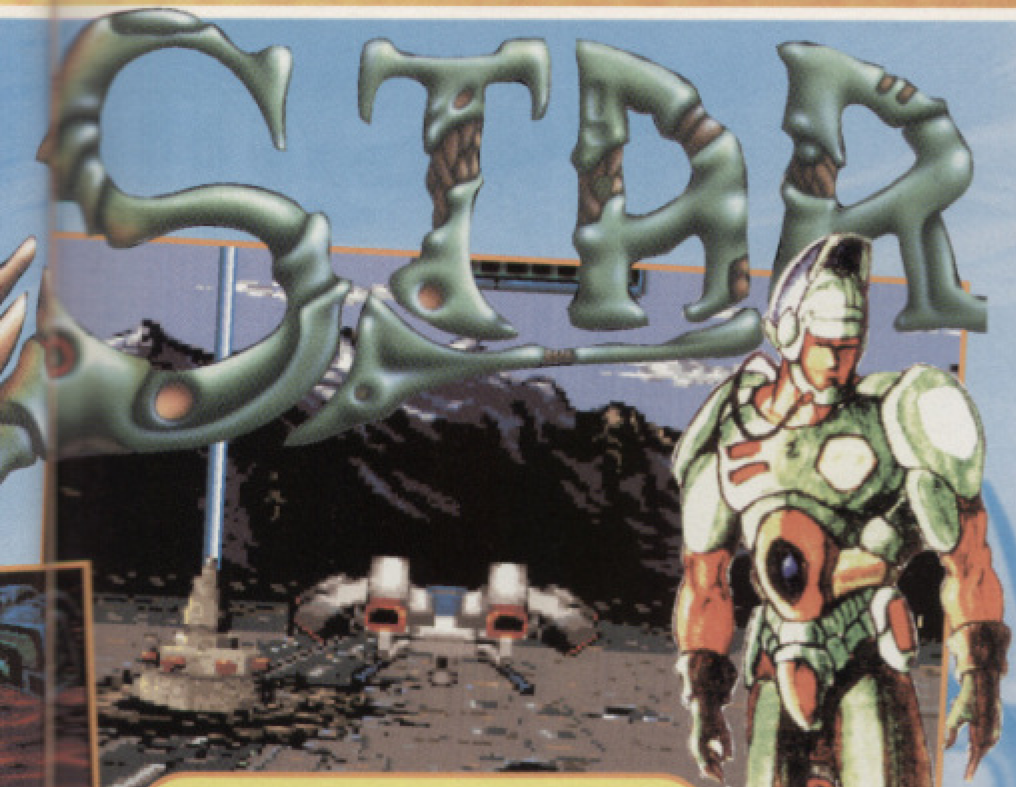






▲ *I'm a rocketman, hurtling through the stratosphere.*

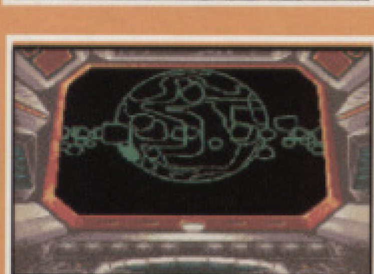




fire power

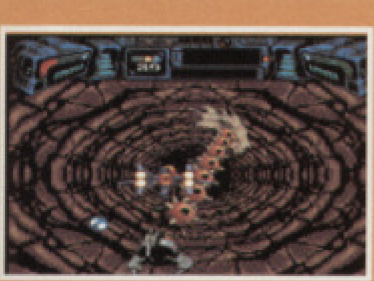
As with any shoot 'em up worth its salt, a varied menu of armaments is essential. When you spot a 'P' symbol, shoot it and fly through the rotating circle to collect the bonus.





▲ *A hi-tech computer, yesterday. Called ORAC or Slave, probably.*





destination"?"

Once you have successfully completed the Warship level, three exits open up. It's decision time: whether to take the easy, medium, or hard option. Bear in mind routes follow different paths, over different locations, but all lead to the final confrontation with an undisclosed boss.

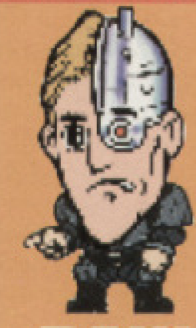


▲ *As Lenny Kravitz said...*



▲ *'Are you gonna go my way?'.*

COMMENT



PAUL

Core have a well-earned reputation of turning out products that push the Mega-CD to the limit. Battlecorps was a great game, incorprating fast and furious gameplay with an original control mechanism. I'm glad to say Soulstar is even more impressive graphically and musically. The different environments zip past at super sonic speed, the enemy sprites pile into you in sweeping formations. Add a touch of emotive orchestral music and you should have an excellent formula. But tragically Soulstar is missing the essential panache in gameplay to make it a Mega Game. Boredom quickly sets in after the first couple of levels because nothing very exciting happens. The pace does pick up slightly during the Copter levels, but these are too few and far between. Shame really.

COMMENT



GUS

Soulstar is nothing if not a disappointment after Battle corps. Using a very similar engine to construct the game takes away any element of surprise, and the gameplay is inferior, with none of the three sections sparkling. The Strike Craft sections are particularly tedious, spoiling the enjoyment of target hunting on the Copter and Walker stages. But even these are too drawn out to stay interesting. Graphics and sound fare better, with a Williamsesque score and frequent impressive FX sequences. But as a whole, I was left unwarmed by the Soulstar.

GRAPHICS 90

▲ Seriously spectacular! Stunning use of scaling, scrolling, and rotation. Also great use of colour, achieving 64 colours on-screen.

SOUND 93

▲ A beautifully orchestrated score worthy of a feature film.
▼ Too often the music overpowers the FX making them redundant.

PLAYABILITY 78

▲ The Copter sections are a joy to play.
▼ Tthe space flight and walker levels lack inspiration and timing, verging on being boring.

LASTABILITY 80

▲ The tough difficulty setting combined with three craft to master, and three routes of difficulty, make this a tough nut to crack.
▼ The boredom factor on some levels does play a part of the equation.

VFM 79

▲ Represents solid value for money, with a substantial amount of game playing hours.

OVERALL 77

A damn fine piece of programming both visually and musically, but sorely missing the elusive sparkle of a Mega Game.

Pete Sampras TENNIS

PLAYERS	1-2
MEG	4
PRICE	£29.99
BY	CODEMASTERS
RELEASE	OCTOBER
GAME TYPE	SPORTS

Following the sparkling success of Petey Sampras on the Megadrive a couple of months ago, comes the Game Gear conversion. The plot is essentially the same as the original, boasting the moves, grooves, options, and not to mention ol' Pete's brighter than bright smile.

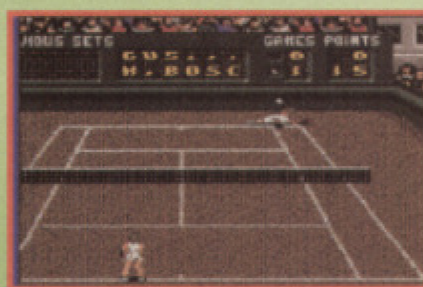
Included are the various play options, Challenge, Tournament, and World Tour, all of which can be played to death with a choice of 30 tennis stars. On an innovative note, the boffins at Codemasters have designed a two player system for Game Gear owners with chums. New balls, please!

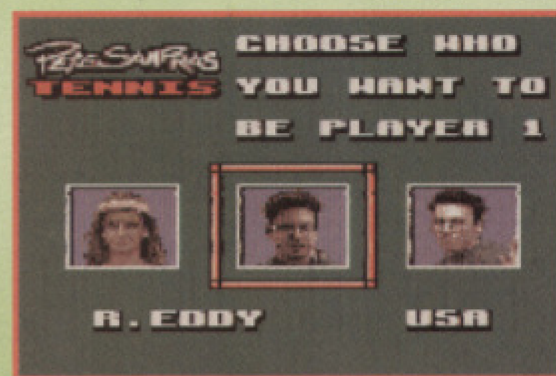
COMMENT



GUS

Codemasters are rapidly making the Game Gear their own. Pete Sampras is the perfect pastime for tennis mad owners lucky enough to have a handheld. Okay, the two on one gear option is anatomicclly improbable, but the rest of the game is all present and correct.









2 FUN-LIMITED

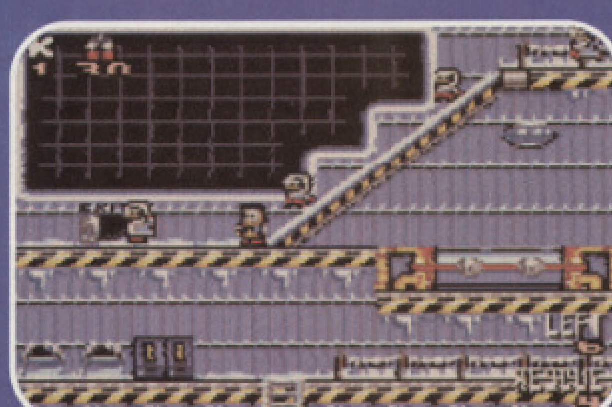
Aside from the usual game link option, two people can play on one Gear. Yep, that's right! The characters move automatically, while shots are taken using the I and II, for player one, and the D-pad for player two.

S.S. LUCIFER

PLAYERS	1
MEG	4
PRICE	£27.99
BY	CODEMASTERS
RELEASE	OCTOBER
GAME TYPE	PUZZLE

Remember the Posiden Adventure? All those fantastic seventies styles, immortal performances from Hollywood's finest bit part actors, and, of course, the torrents of sea water crashing through the upturned hulk of a pleasure cruiser. And here we have the scenario for the platform-bound puzzler from the creators at Codemasters.

Kevin, being the friendly sort of chap he is, jumps in his submersible to rescue the passengers and crew of the slowly sinking SS Lucifer. In an obvious state of panic, the shipwreckees have lost all sense of direction and need young Kev to guide them to the exits. With more than 90 levels and an ever increasing number of passengers and crew to be rescued, success appears to be no mean feat.

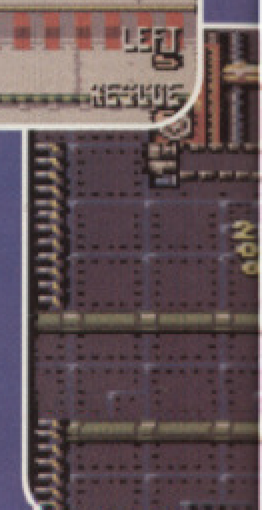




GUIDED TOUR

A cunning use of levers, bombs, and timing is the key to successfully rescuing the cast-aways. Various nasties block the safe paths, and these have to either be removed or avoid-ed to protect your party.

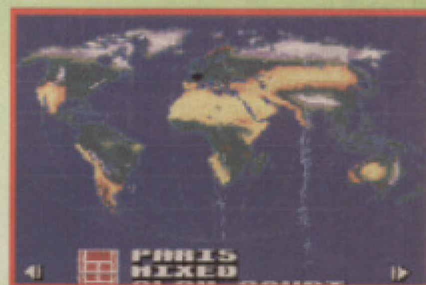




mpras
NIS



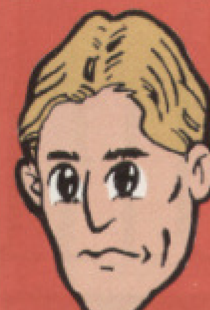




COACH PARK

'Practise makes perfect', as they say, and a Tutorial mode is built in to help aspiring centre court stars. Although it doesn't have the Megadrive version's graphical demonstration of shots and technique, the info is all here in text form.

COMMENT



PAUL

Petey Sampras and the Gear go together like strawberries and cream! Capturing the clear visuals with the smooth and fluid movement, this is a superb conversion of an already superb game. And although the two player option is a bit of a let down, it's still a laugh. A guarantee of many hours of hand-held fun!



GRAPHICS 91
Practically identical to the Megadrive version, just as slick and clear.

SOUND 76
Solid thwomps from the serves and polite rounds of applause, not much else.

PLAYABILITY 90
Just as fab as the Megadrive version, but two player option is awkward.

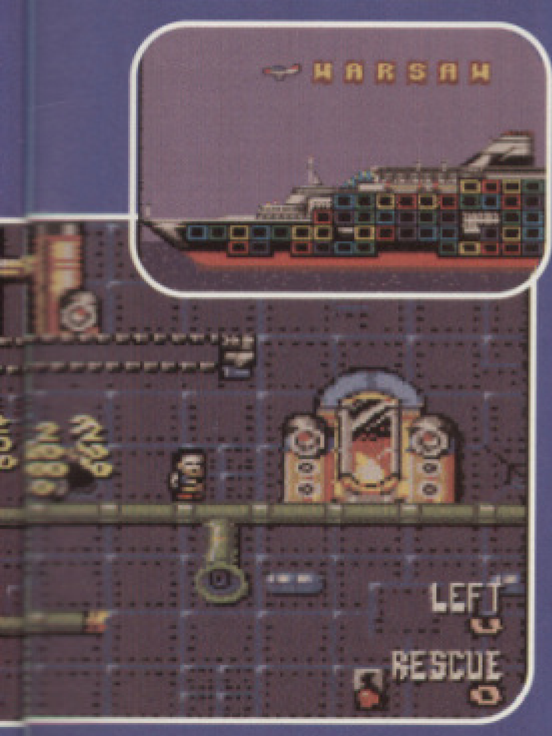
LASTABILITY 92
30 players, three game styles, oodles to keep you going.

VFM 89
A fab game for under 30 quid! Great value.

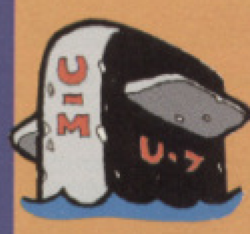
OVERALL 91
A smashing Gear conversion with a few cuts, but all the atmosphere and fun. Grand!

MARITIME LIMIT

Mind you, there's no time to dawdle! Kev has to be mighty sharp on keeping a eye on the ever increasing water level. Once the level gets too high, the passengers and crew lose their footing and slowly drown!

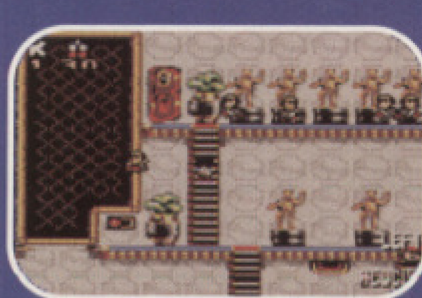


COMMENT



GUS

Two things attract me to S.S Lucifer. One, I love the Poseidon adventure idea, and secondly, I'm rather partial to the odd puzzler. And there hasn't been much on that front since Lemmings and Popils. Now along comes Man Overboard with more levels than lifeboats on the Titanic and some smartly conceived gameplay. And it's original too.



COMMENT



PAUL

Beneath a simplistically designed and devised game, lies a real monster of a puzzler. The control system is wonderfully easy to pick up, allowing the player to fully concentrate on the mind-boggling teasers. This is addictive stuff, and ideally suited to the Game Gear and the password means it can be played in stop-start situations. A smart little number.



GRAPHICS 82
Fast and fluid, if a little on the small side.

SOUND 81
Jolly little sea-faring tunes, but sometimes a bit repetitive.

PLAYABILITY 89
Simple and highly addictive.

LASTABILITY 90
Over 90 levels of increasing difficulty will last a fair while.

VFM 87
A good price for loads of game.

OVERALL 89
A huge addictive puzzler all packed into a handheld. Great stuff!

MORTAL KOMBAT II

1-2 PLAYERS	8 MEG
PRICE	TBA
BY	ACCLAIM
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
GAME TYPE	BEAT 'EM UP

Sometimes things get a little unfair in the Sega family. The oldest brother of the lot, good old Master System, often misses out on toys to play with because wunderkind Megadrive flashes those doey eyes and nabs all the goodies.

But thanks to Shao Kahn, the Master System has received an invite to a smaller, more bijou Mortal Kombat II tournament of its own. Four of the twelve contenders have decided to grab some winter sun, but for the remaining eight, it's another fight to the death.



COMMENT

PAUL

Probe sure set themselves a task and a half with this conversion and they have done a remarkable job. Yet the Game Gear version somehow managed to keep up with the Megadrive's power, whereas the Master System just cannot stand the heat. Saying this, MK II is undoubtedly the best beat 'em up on the 8bit star of yesteryear and deserves a look at.





IMMORTAL MORTALS

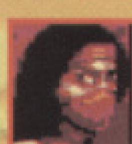
Obviously some trimming was necessary to pack the coin-op into the Master System cart, but still let's have a look at the moves and grooves.



LUI KANG
BICYCLE KICK, FLYING KICK, FIREBALL (HIGH AND LOW), FATALITY



SUB-ZERO
FREEZE (HIGH AND LOW), SLIDE, FATALITY



MILEENA
SAI-THROW, ROLL ATTACK, TELEPORT KICK, FATALITY



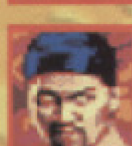
KITANA
FAN SWIPE, FAN LIFT, FAN TOSS, SQUARE DIVE, FATALITY



SCORPION
SPEAR, TELEPORT, SCISSOR KICK, AIR THROW, FATALITY



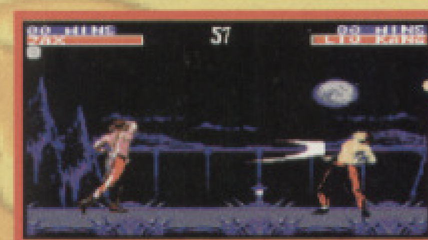
REPTILE
ACID SPIT, ORB, INVISIBILITY, FATALITY



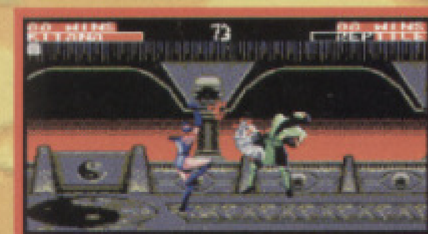
SHANG TSUNG
FIREBALL (1, 2, AND 3 BALLS), MORPH, FATALITY



JAX
EARTHQUAKE, ENERGY WAVE, GOTCHA GRAB, BACK BREAKER, SUPER SLAM, FATALITY



▲ *Jax stuns Liu Kang using the old 'what's that up there?' trick.*



▲ *Ooyah! This cast iron sporran is starting to pinch.*

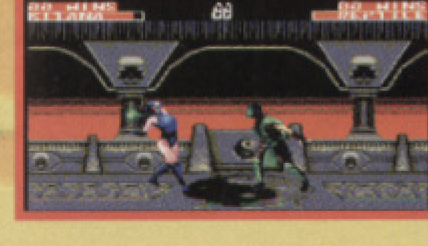


▲ *I have a delicious, nutritious loser in the morning...*



▲ *These new dance crazes will never catch on, thought Mileena ruefully.*







COMMENT

STEVE

In theory, this Master System conversion of MKII shold be direct port from the Game Gear version. To look at, it most certainly is as all the animations and fatalities of the handheld game are there. However, somewhere along the line loads of jerkiness and slowdown have crept in, making this a disappointing conversion. Still, it's the best of a bad bunch for MS owners.

GRAPHICS 90
Successfully retains the detailed characters, but loses speed.

SOUND 75
The original tunes and thumps in Master System-o-rama.

PLAYABILITY 79
Hideously slow and pedestrian, but still a great laugh.

LASTABILITY 82
Flawed, but still an essential purchase for Master System owners.

VFM 79
Eight great characters with loads of moves to learn.

OVERALL 80
Ambitious and impressive in the looks department, yet cumbersome in the speed stakes.

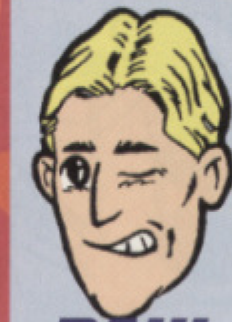
1-4 PLAYERS	8 MEG
PRICE	£39.95
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	TBA
GAME TYPE	SPORT



They're tiny, they're toony, they're altogether loony. You must know the tune by now. Yep, those meddlesome Tiny Toons are here to make an appearance on the Megadrive for the ACME Looniversity Soccer and Basketball tournament, to determine the best team in town.

All the familiar faces from the Warner Brothers studios are here to wow and amaze you with their sporting talents, competing in teams of four against either the CPU or player two. But being the rascals they are, a few tricks are bound to be popping out of sleeves.

COMMENT



PAUL

The Toonies present an unusual combination of fluffy cartoon characters and a challenging difficulty level in one player mode. The control system takes some getting used to, but after a while the rewards are reaped. The added events are a good laugh, the best of which being the bowling. Ultimately this is a family product with nothing too demanding and plenty of good laughs.





Just plain old over-exuberance mashing the Montanas!



TEAM ACTION

As with all sports comes the dreaded team selection, and of course not everyone can be chosen. It's a time for team tactics, signing up Little Bleeper on the wing for speed, Buster Bunny in goal with his big hands. After all the difference between success and defeat lies in the team's hands. There are no fat or wheezy characters, though...

COMMENT



GUS

I don't care for this at all, unlike Paul. I'd rather have a copy of FIFA or NBA Jam than two half-baked cartoon versions which lack any real feel or gameplay sophistication. The extra events look like the extra gameplay padding they are — the obstacle course being a particular waste of anyone's time.









GRAPHICS	**87**
As fun, colourful, and humourous as the animated series.	
SOUND	**85**
All the favourites are here, and you'll be whistling them for weeks.	
PLAYABILITY	**79**
Once the control system is mastered, the events are fast and furious.	
LASTABILITY	**77**
The character and the sport selections mean quite a long life.	
VFM	**77**
With plenty packed in and playable games, not a bad buy.	
OVERALL	**78**
A cutesy lark in the park, ideally suited to younger players, but lacking sophistication.	

TOON TIME

It's not just footballing and basketballing fare, you know. The toonsters can take a break from team sports to have a crack at an Obstacle Course, Ten Pin Bowling, and the rather unsportsmanlike pursuit of Montana Hitting (like Mallet Legend, but with Montana replacing the usual dumb animals).

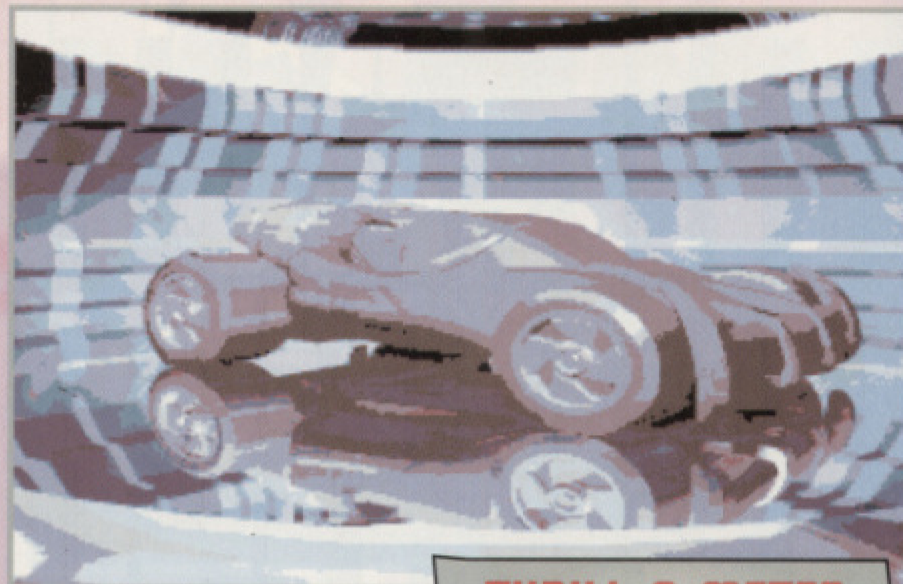


PLAYERS	1-4
PRICE	£39.99
BY	MINDSCAPE
RELEASE	OUT NOW
GAME TYPE	RACING

MEGARACE™

The future. The Solar System colonised, cities cover the ocean beds, air-borne cars, wall-sized TV's, robot servants. Wars and conflict have been resigned to museum pieces and play no part in the corporate state. It's just like an Usborne book of the future. Bliss!

To get their kicks, contestants enter Virtual Reality TV shows to live out wildest fantasies. Top of the ratings league is Mega Race. A driver's dream, you can wipe the boy racer and road hog scum from the tarmac with a 20 millimetre laser-sighted cannon and armour piercing bullets. Set over 14 tracks, there's plenty of thrills and spills for the TV audience.





THRILL-O-METER

In the world of TV, it's audience figures that count. Bearing this in mind if you don't make the ratings forget sympathy when you fail. On the other hand, if you drive a good race, but just miss out on the last lap, a second chance track is made available.

TRACK MEET

To add excitement to the proceedings bonuses have been left on the tracks. From speed up, to points bonus, to ammo on the later tracks, beware as they all have identical icons placed to have the reverse effect.





COMMENT

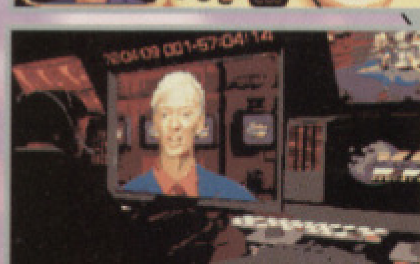


GUS

This impresses in all the wrong places. Yes, the video is some of the best rendered on the Mega-CD. Yes, presentation is slick. Yes, the 3D effect is smooth. No, the actual game isn't any good. All that is required is the destruction of a few trundling opponents. It's not a real race game at all, and suffers from wafer-thin gameplay elements to boot.





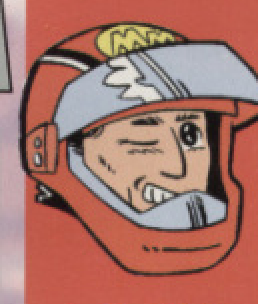


HERE'S LANCE!

Megarace is compered by the effusive Lance Boil who offers encouragement and commiserations in his own shiny-suited way. The frequent intermissions are created from digitised footage of an actor playing the role.

GRAPHICS	75	Stunning FMV intro and background design, but dreadful car
SOUND	70	Nothing special in the music and FX departments.
PLAYABILITY	61	Repetitive and frustrating with slack collision detection.
LASTABILITY	52	The 14 tracks are quite a handful, if you can be bothered.
VFM	60	A bit much for a load of presentation sequences and little gameplay.
OVERALL	55	Once again, all presentation and backdrops with no attention to the essential gameplay factor.

COMMENT



PAUL

Yet again the presentation overwhelms the gameplay. The intro is stunning and the Lance Boil FMV is quite an achievement for the Mega CD. But the gameplay is frustrating and with little point to it. Okay, so the idea of merging the action with FMV backdrops is novel and credit worthy, but not if the game isn't up to much. The collision detection is dreadful – some of the obstacles being impossible to avoid – and CPU opponents are identical. All of this is not to mention the downright awful Lance Boil. Steer clear of this offering.



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MEAN YOB

Oh goody another month's worth of inane scribblings from a group of illiterate halfwits whose IQ runs slightly under Arsenal's current home goal tally. Let me see... Yep, words such as 'mucus-swilling', 'pile-chewing' and 'pustule-poking' make another visit, as do numerous concepts of my parentage. This got me thinking — which some of you may like to try sometime — how about a few letters which actually stretch me a little? If you're up to it, that is...
To have your tawdry ramblings paraded in front of me, send them to:

ELEMENTARY FISH MANIPULATION MEAN YOB,
MEAN MACHINES SEGA,
Priory Court,
3-32 Farringdon Lane,
London,
EC1R 3AU



TROY TEMPEST

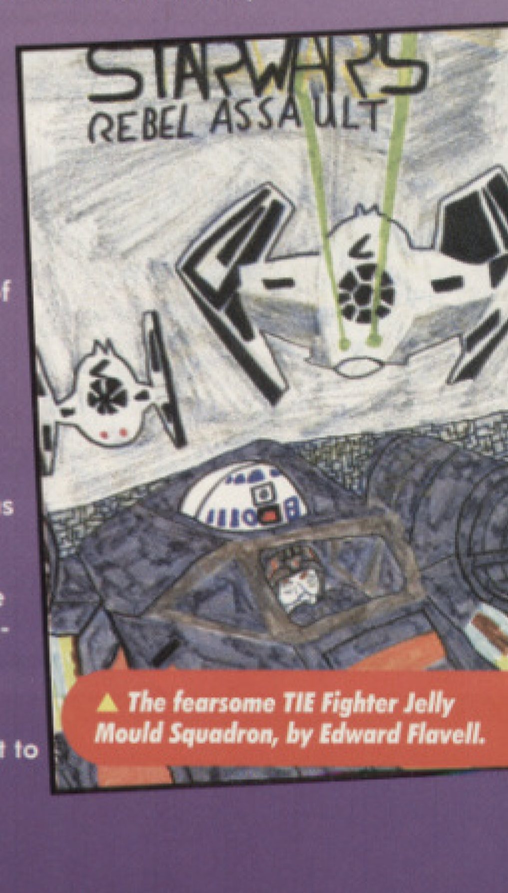
Dear Yob
Are you Jimmy Hill with blonde hair, or are you just a dribbling, bed wetting butt munch? You're about as funny as Roy Walker telling his life story. We've got a friend called Joe Mills, who has a dodgy haircut like you. Don't you just hate SEGA MAGAZINE? I mean all they go on about is the Mega-32. Why don't we just buy the Mega-32 manual?!
Zippy, Bungle, and Jeffrey,
Rainbowland

YOB: It was interesting to see Jeffrey in the paper the other day stacking shelves in a DIY superstore — a glittering end to a varied career! Mind you, at least his CV contains more than 'had a man's hand up my jacksy for fifteen years' like Zippy's does....

JOE 90

Dear Yob
Who the heck does Darren Ellis think he is insulting you like that? Tell me Darren, how long did it take you to dream up all those grown-up words? If those poor defenceless 10 year-olds don't like being insulted, then they should sod off to your sad excuse for a hole you call a home, and indulge in your treasured Bunty collection. And what does old Yobbo get out of insulting friendless morons with piles, a little like you and your mates? Paid, I should think! Something you've never experienced. Just go and stick with your own kind, you ill, twisted, rectum muncher who doesn't deserve a space on Earth. If you write to Yob again trying to insult him, I'll declare war!
Adam 'Watch it Darren' Mason,
Ascot

YOB: The Darren Ellises of this world only go to remind us of how gifted the majority of us are. If he didn't exist, we wouldn't have anyone to laugh at as he sat on the divvy bus on the way to collect his weekly rations of Deep Heat to rub into his piles. Don't worry about Darren, simply being himself is punishment enough.



▲ *The fearsome TIE Fighter Jelly Mould Squadron, by Edward Flavell.*

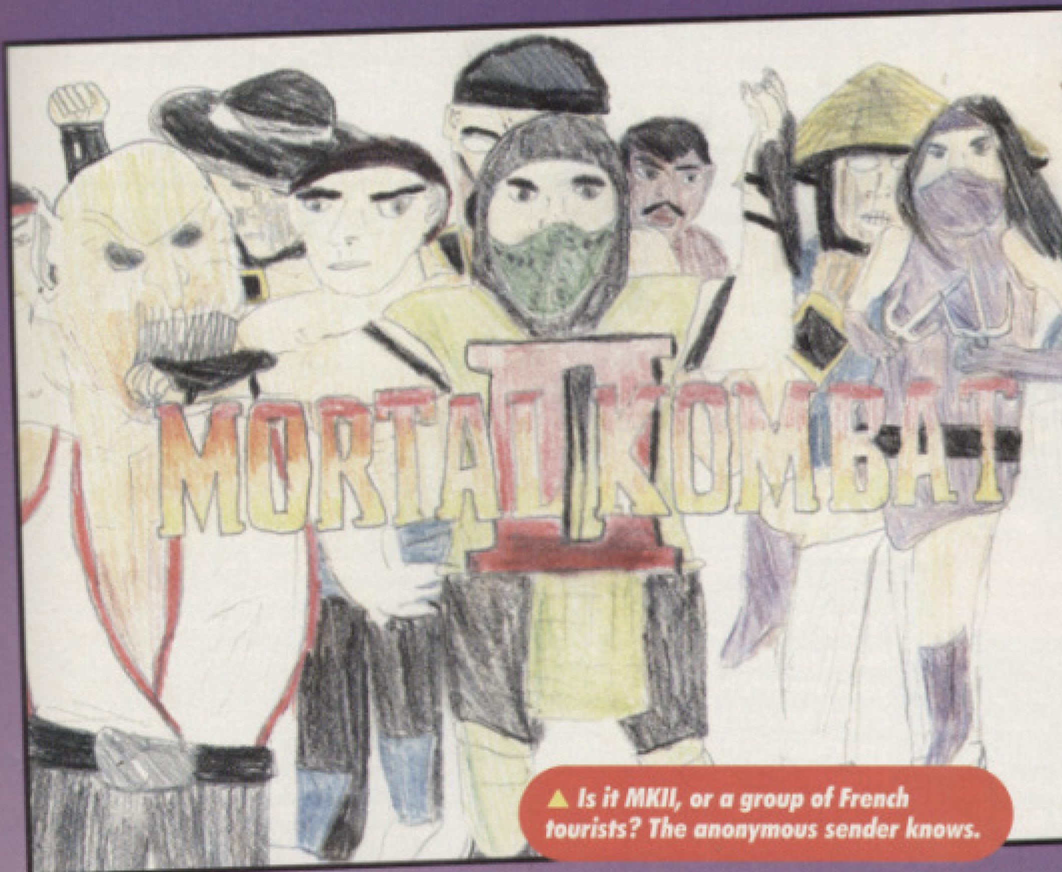
VIRGIL

Dear Yob
I have a few points to make. Firstly, you should never, ever say mean things about your Mummy. You are the most disgusting, foul-mouthed, skunky cretin to ever walk the Earth. You are the world's biggest gimboid, and your mother still ties your shoelaces. Your life has sunk so low that you have to call up chat lines to find a girl who will shack up with you. You fancy Julie Martin off Neighbours (she's 26, you know!). Do you get cheap thrills from listening to Barry Manilow records and insulting people?
Mr Universe, Anonland

You, on the other hand, have nothing better to do than to write to someone you so obviously dislike. I guess that must make me your best friend, you sad little oozing from an ulcerous bum cleft.

BRAINS

Dear Yob
Hello there! It's me again, your old friend Arnie. Sorry I didn't write sooner, but I've been busy, what with filming my latest movie, True Lies, opening restaurants, starting wars, entertaining a T-1000. You know Yob, I've been thinking how lucky you Englishmen are. I mean I



▲ *Is it MKII, or a group of French tourists? The anonymous sender knows.*

come from Switzerland, I think, and what has my country ever done apart from make watches and open bank accounts? But over there in the UK, you lot have got London, the Queen, Doctor Who, and Cammy from SSF II. That reminds me, could you put me in touch with Cammy, because she's got the best figure I've ever seen? I'm sure you know her, as you hang out with all the stars. I'm going now, but you can bet your ass that I'll be back!
Arnold Schwarzenegger, Hollywood
YOB: Here's to your forthcoming sequel to The Last Action Hero, you condom full of tagnuts. You win the Joe Pasquale Award for 'entertainer' of the month.

UNCLE SAM

Dear Yob
We have recently escaped from a local lunatic asylum. We think that you are a stupid flob, and that your page isn't fit to be used for toilet paper. If you don't send us 5 billion pounds each, we will come to your house and rip off your ugly head, rip out your spine, remove your bowels, and make you drink cat wee. Get the message?
Allan G and Peter M, Paisley, Scotland
YOB: It's good to see brainless goits like yourselves allowed back into the community ready to walk up to people at Victoria station and screaming in their faces, before peeing your pants and scratching your nuts before walking away. Ever thought of careers as javelin catchers?



▲ *Michael Oscar of London provides an award worthy MKII montage.*

CAPTAIN BLACK

**Dear Yob
I am Salek, an advanced entity from the distant world, Cyber 4. Firstly, is your chin related to Jimmy White? If it is, you're a poor fermented cabbage. Anyway, back to business. My home planet is suffering ozone depletion and is going to be destroyed. But that is unimportant. The important issue is everyone on Cyber 4 has a SEGA system, but there is no SEGA magazine. So I have been sent by my race to ask for your help. If you don't help, I will be forced to remove each hair on your head with a pair of tweezers. Cuckoo!
Salek, No Fixed Abode**
You honestly think your the crowned prince of comedy don't you? You probably sit in your darkened room with a cluster of crispy tissues next to your bed, reciting lines from 'May To December' and 'Home Improvement.' If the average Cyber 4 resident is equal to your intelligence, I'm surprised you managed to use your stubby crayon to write your pathetic scrawl without taking one of your eyes out in the process.

MARINA

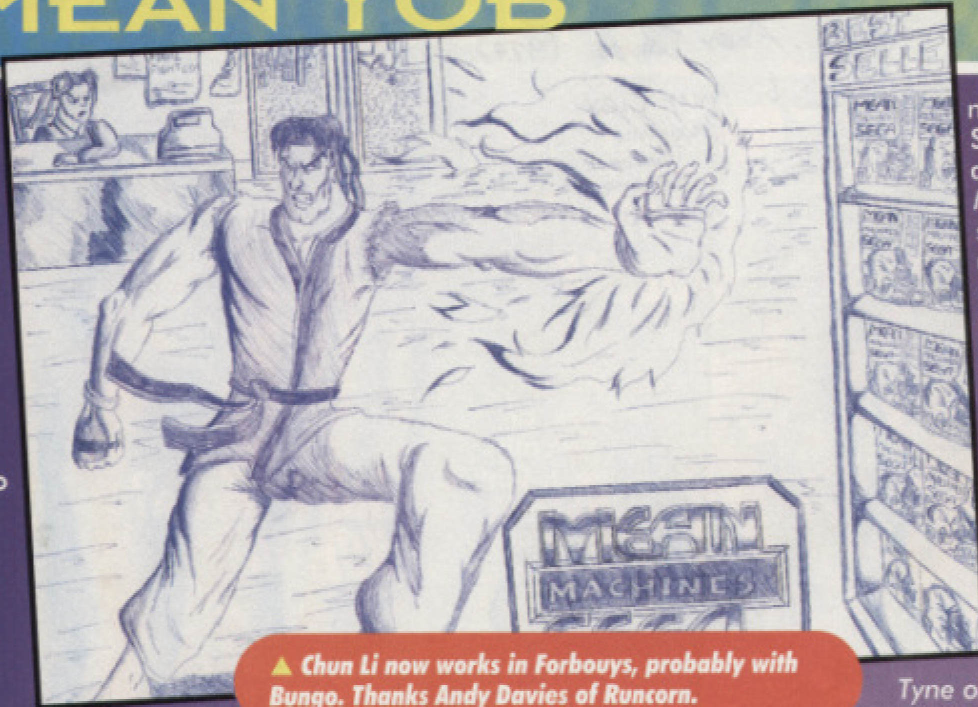
Dear Yob
I was talking to my friend Daniel and he was wondering if SEGA/Probe were going to make use of Hasbro's wonderful toy making facilities to make replicas of Baraka and co. I think they would be loads better than the SF II figures.
James Scott, Felixstowe
YOB: I can imagine it now. New Baraka, now with extra sharp blades and eye-gouging enhancements! Sadly, I doubt if it will happen as parents are often warned not to let their kids play with dangerous things!

COMMANDER KOENIG

Dear Yob
I know this topic is a bit worn out, but sod it. I am going to write a letter about the dreaded Margaret Shelly. I have read her letters before, but after flicking through some old issues of MMS, I realised what a pile of cack they are. What the hell is she on about? Computer games aren't some sort of force to capture the minds of children, they are for people to enjoy in their homes. I'm sure that if you play SSF II at home, you aren't going to want to blast somebody with a round of fireballs. She also talked about young people needing guidance — old bags like her need the guidance.
Brian Queen, Darlington
YOB: Of course video games are released to turn us all into granny-bashig zombies. Right, if you'll excuse me, Sonic has asked me to torture a few OAPs



▲ *Gus shows off his designer lurgy, courtesy of Jack du Rose, Birmingham.*



▲ *Chun Li now works in Forbouys, probably with Bungo. Thanks Andy Davies of Runcorn.*

so
I

must be off. That's a cool surname, by the way...

STEVE ZODIAC

Dear Yob
You must have the brain of one of those stupid flies that sits on cow pats licking up the cack and then puking on it. Your nose looks like an up-turned flying saucer that's crashed. Your eyebrows look like the wool hanging over a sheep's butt encrusted in crap. You couldn't outsmart a dead tadpole! Get life you sad Yob!
Will Fawcett, Newbury
YOB: I bet you didn't tell your mum you were sending this letter. Mind you, I expect your parents prefer it when you don't bother them. I know I do you pathetic weasel-worrying bag of sputum.

ZELDA

Dear Yob
To start, I would like to say your insults are as funny as your face. You have made a big mistake (bigger than your Mum's mistake when she had you), you said that the Hyper magazine is a sheep shearing mag! Huh! Not funny and not true. Hyper is excellently cool. They had all the moves, babalities, fatalities, and friendships there are. There is another excellent Aussie mag called Megazone. Oh, by the way, you shouldn't use monkey bums for plastic surgery.
An Australian in a Pom Country
YOB: When you consider that the greatest Aussie gifts to mankind are 'A Country Practice' and Jason Donovan why are you surprised when we dismiss your mags so easily. Honestly, you'd resent us if we exported Worlds Apart and that awful Keith Barron sitcom set in a bakery. As for your insults, congratulations I see the art of sentence structure has finally reached the land of sheep-worriers.

MELODY ANGEL

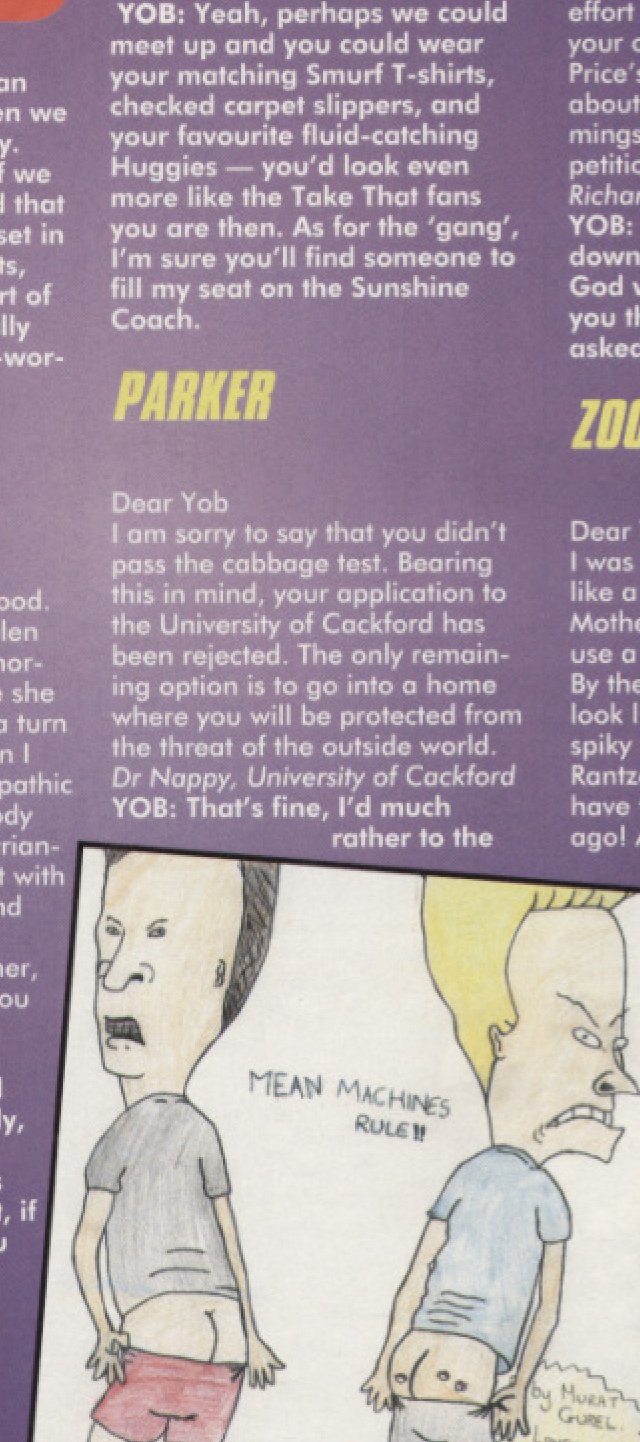
Dear Yob
Oh the innocence of adulthood. And there I was thinking Helen Rossendale was a straight, normal human being. But there she is trying to make out Yob's a turn on. Call me stupid, but when I see you all I see is a psychopathic potato-head freak with a body that's green and hideously triangular. Yob is Ronnie Corbett with a face like a slapped ass, and the worst comedian in the world. I'll insult you no further, because if you read MMS, you must be alright.
Guile, Pantsland
YOB: You sound surprised that I'm a turn-on! Honestly, I'm such a sex god I could make any bloke so jealous he'd Bobbit himself. In fact, if the things I hear about you are true so-called Guile, you'd be better off if you did!

TIN-TIN

Dear Yob
This is Crusher, Berk, and Tornado from the gang. We wanted you to know that while we were scanning your page in the September issue, we came across a letter from Mummy. Why Yob, how sweet! Why didn't you tell us you had a teddy? We can't wait to see you in your new Captain Scarlet jumper. And fancy wetting the bed at your age! It wouldn't surprise us if your real name was Edward or Charles or something. Just wait 'til we tell the rest of the gang our leader is Mumsie's little diddums. You're out of the gang!
The Gang, Washington, Tyne on Wear
YOB: Yeah, perhaps we could meet up and you could wear your matching Smurf T-shirts, checked carpet slippers, and your favourite fluid-catching Huggies — you'd look even more like the Take That fans you are then. As for the 'gang', I'm sure you'll find someone to fill my seat on the Sunshine Coach.

PARKER

Dear Yob
I am sorry to say that you didn't pass the cabbage test. Bearing this in mind, your application to the University of Cackford has been rejected. The only remaining option is to go into a home where you will be protected from the threat of the outside world.
Dr Nappy, University of Cackford
YOB: That's fine, I'd much rather to the Demonford University in Milton Keynes. According to the advert on TV you get chased by killer whales there.



▲ *We'd like to tell Murat Gurel of London that his picture sucks. Heheheh, heheheh, heheheh.*

TIGER NINESTEIN

Dear Yob
What on Earth do you look like? A right sad case that's what! Now, Mohican haircuts went out with thank tops, although you probably own the world's only tank top megastore. Wearing an earring makes you look like a right woman. Will you please stop dribbling? It's something babies do. Would it take much effort to grab a hanky and wipe your chin? I agree with Chris Price's letter in Issue 22, you're about as hard as a load of lemmings after a cliff jumping competition. Insult me if you can.
Richard Kleiser, Maidstone
YOB: I don't need to do you down. I mean, let's face it when God was handing out brains, you thought he said trains and asked for a slow, stopping one.

ZOOMY

Dear Yob
I was wondering why you look like a baboon's rectum? Did your Mother not like you at birth, and use a mallet to hit you back in? By the way, what do you really look like? Have you really got spiky hair, and teeth like Ester Rantzen? If I was you, I would have topped myself a long time ago! Anyway I'm the best at Sonic the Hedgehog. I can clear Stage 1 Act 1 in 16.32 seconds flat!! Do you want to know why you haven't heard from Mrs. M Shelley recently? I ate her, and it was the worst thing I've ever eaten. Perhaps I'll have you for dinner sometime.
Hannibal the Cannibal, Baltimore State Penitentiary, West Virginia
YOB: I doubt it, I wouldn't share a table with someone with so little hand-eye co-ordination they are constantly wandering around with a sausage up each nostril.

MEGAMART

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SPURS



Dear Steve
Please can you answer my questions.
1. You said Syndicate would be out in August. Where is it?
2. Why has there been such a drastic change to the graphics in the Megadrive version of Syndicate? I thought the Amiga graphics were pretty smart.
3. Will Syndicate use the Sega Mouse?
4. Has the Megadrive MK 2 got the intro from the coin-op? I heard it has been left out.
5. Will an Amiga mouse work on the Megadrive?
Damien Murphy, Abingdon
STEVE: 1. It has been delayed. 2. It's down to the resolution differences between the two machines. 3. It hasn't been decided yet. 4. It never survided the conversion I'm afraid. 5. Nope.

By the time you read this, I'll be gearing myself up for the Live '94 show at Earls Court from September 20th - 25th. I'll be hosting a rather smart Sega-related challenge where you'll be invited to take part in a series of driving challenges on SIX linked Daytona machines! Our aim is to find the ultimate Daytona player, and if you're there on the Sunday (25th) make sure you get up and have a go. We'll mock losers of course, but, hey, that's life! Until then, if you have any other queries, drop me a line AT:
THE BARAKA ADOPTION AGENCY Q&A,
MEAN MACHINES SEGA,
Priory Court,
30-32 Farringdon Lane,
London,
EC1R 3AU

SCALPS

Dear Steve
Congrats on your mag, it's fab. Now could you answer some Qs?
1. Why do systems like the CD-i, 3DO, and CD 32 have separate FMV?
2. Is it worth buying a Megadrive and Mega-CD separately, or just a Multi-Mega?
3. Could you list the best 3 Mega-CD games?
4. How many letters do you get a month?
Rob, Takely
STEVE: 1. Because the prices of the machines would rocket if they were built in. However, FMV is a recent addition, so the makers hadn't allowed for it during the development of some machines. 2. Go for the Multi-Mega, it looks so cool with the32X on top. 3. Battlecorp, Final Fight, Ecco. 4. Enough to repaper the office every month, and enough to give Paul Bufton nasty callouses when he opens them all!

BANDITS

Dear Steve
Could you use your amazing knowledge to answer these questions, oh great one?
1. Is Sonic and Knuckles compatible with Sonic 1, 2, and 3?
2. Is there going to be a Streetfighter 3?
3. When Shaq-Fu comes out, will the sprites be larger?
4. My mate says there are 'animalities' in MK 2. Is this true?
J Slater, Cheshire
STEVE: 1. It's compatible with Sonic 2 and Sonic 3, but no the first. 2. Capcom's coin-op division are on it right now. Apparently, only Ken, Ryu and Sagat survive and are joined by more new fighters. 3. Sadly, no. 4. No, Animalities were going to appear, but the programmers ran out of time. Rumour has it, though, that the Megadrive game has something called a 'Fergality' in it. More news soon.

SPITOONS

Dear Steve
Here are some questions I need answering.
1. Will Dune ever come out on the Game Gear?
2. Who is Lord EMAP?
3. How come your address is the same as CVG?
4. I've been reading your mag for about a year, yet when I started reading, people had been reading your mag for about 2 years, but there have only been about 20 issues. Why?
James Pearce, Pontefract
STEVE: 1. Nope. 2. He Who Must Be Obeyed at all times. 3. Because they are our sister magazine — a floor up from us, in fact. We can smell them from here. 4. When MEAN MACHINES first appeared nearly four years ago, it covered both Nintendo and Sega consoles (and the Amstrad for a while!), but split into MMS and NMS two years ago.

SIX-GUNS

Dear Steve
I am not happy. Please answer my questions, as it could affect me and others owning Sega products.
1. I have both a Super NES and a Megadrive and I read in NMS something about the Ultra 64. Can you tell me from a Sega point of view what you think of it and how will the Saturn compare?
2. Will MK 3 be specifically designed for the Ultra 64?
3. If the Ultra 64 is going to cost £200, what would be the point of releasing the Saturn at £500?
4. Is the Super NES version of MK 2 better than the Megadrive?
5. Why did you rate SSF II so high? Apart from the 4 extra characters, it plays like SCE, and the speech is crap.
Iain Ronald, Cardiff
STEVE: 1. The Ultra 64 is Nintendo's next machine and is supposed to be a 64bit machine. However, it isn't due until 1996 at the earliest. It's too early to say how good it will be, but the Saturn is looking just as powerful and a darn sight more believable, too. 2. Nope, a straight conversion is planned, though — but don't discount a Sega conversion despite Midway's new deal with Nintendo. 3. The Ultra 64 will probably cost slightly more than £200, and Sega are planning an almost identical price for

the Saturn. 4. The sprites are bigger, but the Megadrive version is faster. 5. I didn't, I reckon it's a real rip-off. Gus and Paul, however, think it's ace — hence the high score.

DANCIN' GOILS

Dear Steve
Please, please could you answer my questions?
1. Will there be a Megadrive 32X arcade perfect SF II so I can link it through my Hi-Fi?
2. Are Electronic Arts going to produce games for the 32X?
3. How many colours can the 32X produce on screen at one time?
4. What's the latest on Jimmy White's Snooker?
Shahid Latif, Walthamstow, London
STEVE: 1. Capcom are working on 32X stuff, but won't say what. I reckon it's a bit of a cert, though. 2. Yup, expect a version of FIFA before long. 3. 32,768 — but this slows down a little. 256 will be the norm. 4. A review will be in the next issue.

INJUNS

Dear Steve
Please could you answer my one question? I have an Action Replay which, for some reason refuses to work with the latest games:Virtua Racing and SSF II. Could you tell me why it works fine with all my other games?
Toby Vernon, Barking
STEVE: Extra chippery is involved in both Virtua and SSF, so the Action Replay can't handle them without locking up.

CHAPS



Dear Steve
I have a few questions I would like answered.
1. Is Theme Park coming out on the Megadrive for Christmas? How much will it cost?
2. Who do you think has the best death move in MK 2?
3. Is it true there's a 3D Ecco game coming out on the Megadrive?
4. When is Clayfighters coming out?
5. I hear Star Trek TNG is not coming out in this country, but I thought it was an excellent game.
Neil Adamson, Dunblame
STEVE: 1. Yes, see this month's WIP. A price has yet to be decided. 2. My fave are Shang Tsung's soul steal and his Kintaro morph. 3. Ecco 2 has 3D in it, but the rest of the game is viewed from the side. 4. Next January. 5. It's a 12MEG cart and Microprose don't think it's worthy of the high price tag they'd have to give it.

GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS



Dear Steve
I love MEAN MACHINES Sega and buy it every month, so I would be extremely honoured if you would print my letter and answer my questions.
1. It is said that a 64bit console is not necessarily better than a 32bit one. How is this possible?
2. If it is possible, Sega's Saturn will have nothing to fear from Nintendo's Ultra 64. Right?
3. As I intend to buy a 32X, do you think it's worth waiting for a 32X version of MK 2, or should I buy the Megadrive version as I've heard it's a pretty good conversion?
4. When is Street Fighter The Movie coming out in Europe?
Bruno Emanuel Batista Ferreira da Silva, Gibraltar
STEVE: 1. It just depends on how its used. I mean, the 32X is a 32bit machine, and the Jaguar a 64bit one — yet the 32X machine is easily the best machine of the two. 2. Yep. 3. The 32X version won't be out for a while but will be excellent. It depends how patient you are. 4. Just after Christmas.

PEACE PIPES

Dear Steve
Could you please answer these questions for me?
1. With the power of the new 32X will the Mega-CD be able to match the PC CD-ROM?
2. Was the Mega-CD a waste of money?
3. Is there any chance of any of the following games coming to Sega systems: Liberation, X-Wing, Tie Fighter, Elite, TFX?
4. Is text, as well as speech, being displayed for Monkey Island, Dune CD, and Rise of the Dragon? As I have a friend who's hard of hearing.
5. What happened to the Sega mouse, and are there any games for it?
6. What is the release date for Rise of the Dragon?
Connor Riley, Limerick, Ireland
STEVE: 1. Sort of, it won't have as much storage space, though. 2. It was a nice idea, but just never really got off the ground. 3. No, no, Sony are working on it, no. 4. All three display text whenever necessary. 5. It's in limbo at the mo, but there are games lining up for it — Lemmings II, for example. 6. There isn't one yet.

MARSHALS

Dear Steve
Oh great one, please answer these questions.
1. Is the excellent Alien vs. Predator arcade game coming out for the Megadrive or 32X?
2. Are the rumours true about Virtua Fighters and Daytona not coming to the 32X true?
3. Is Combat Cars good value for money?
4. Will Landstalker 2, Flashback 2, or Gunstar Heroes 2 appear on the Megadrive or 32X?
Alex Werhun, West Midlands
STEVE: 1. It's not on the cards as of yet. 2. Yes, I'm afraid so. 3. Not really, Micro Machines 2 drops on it from a great height. 4. Possibly, not for a while, no.

Once again, join me as we come to my end piece. Yes, another month of Q&A is over. With a distinct lack of purpose to my life until the next one, I'll sit back and watch the world go by as my Q&A tray rapidly fills up. Actually, next month we'll expand the Q&A pages so you get more answers and I get something else to do. Honestly, it's a hard life being an Editor. Now excuse me whilst I go and dust a copy of Ecco which is looking rather filthy...

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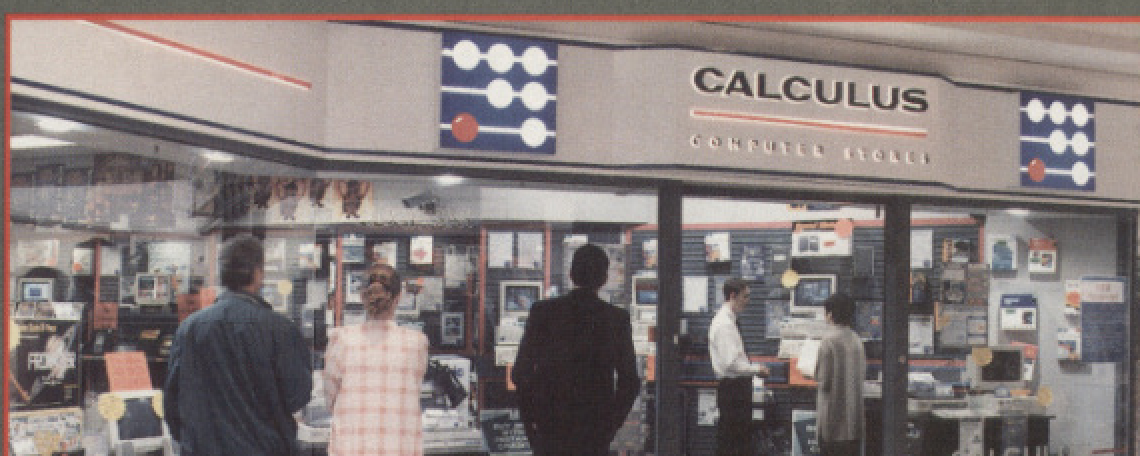
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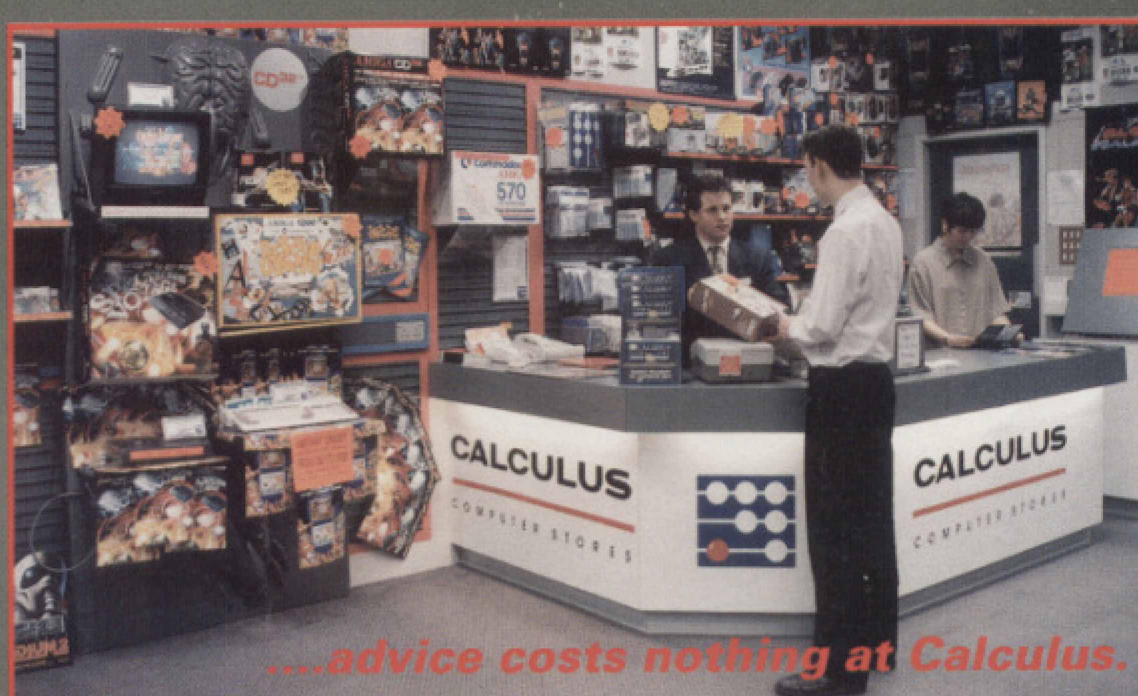
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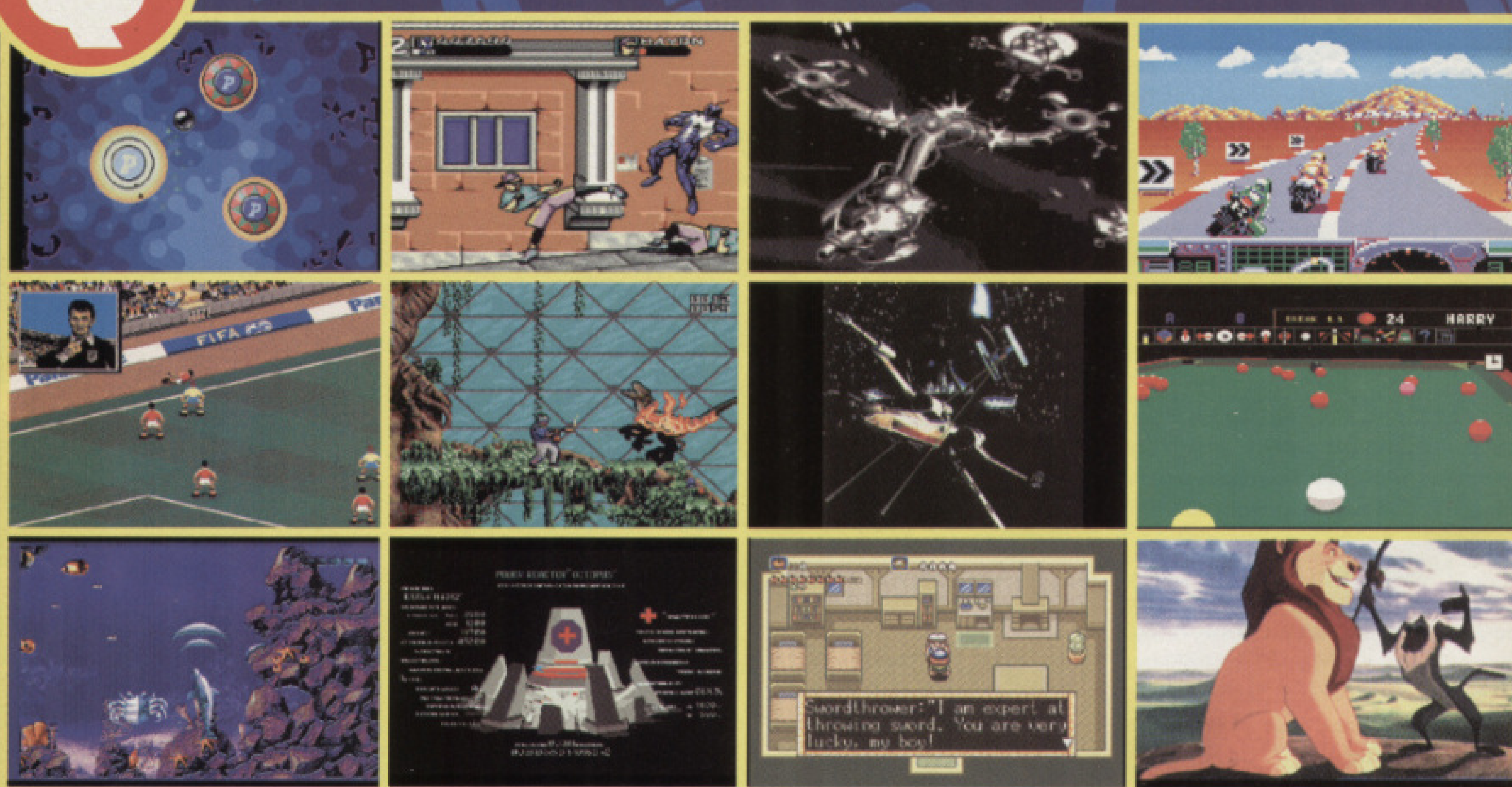
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